4° 53/8 k Turretini 8 (a)

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

Fundamental Articles

IN

RELIGION.

In which a Method is laid down for the more effectual Uniting of

PROTESTANTS,

And promoting a more

General TOLERATION amongſt them.

Being the entire Diſſertation of a late Book, entitled, *Nubes Teſtium*, dedicated to His GRACE the Lord Archbiſhop of *Canterbury.*

LONDON:

Printed by J. DARBY, for A. BELL, A. BETTESWORTH, F. FAYRAM, J. PEMBERTON, C. RIVINGTON, J. HOOKE, F. CLAY, J. BATTLEY, E. SYMON. M.DCC.XX.

Price One Shilling.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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THE PREFACE.

THE following Treatise of Fundamental Articles *was written in* Latin *by the present* M. Turretin, *Professor of Divinity at* Geneva, *so well known for his great Learning and Moderation. The great Applause this Piece has met with in the learned World, together with the Desire of some Friends, prevailed with me to translate it into* English. *In the Original it is prefixed to a*

large Collection of Teſtimonies *from various Writers, which are brought to ſupport and illuſtrate the Doctrine here laid down; and from theſe, which make up far the greateſt Part of the Book, the whole is entitled,* Nubes Teſtium, *i. e.* A Cloud of Witneſſes.

THE Firſt Part *of thoſe* Teſtimonies, *which are taken from* Scripture, *are very plain and full to the purpoſe for which they are deſigned; and worthy the ſerious Conſideration of every Chriſtian: for which reaſon, they are added at the end of this Tranſlation, for the Benefit of the* Engliſh *Reader.*

THE reſt *are all* human, *and produced for the ſake of thoſe who are more apt to be determined by ſuch Authorities, than by Reaſoning and Argument; and ſeem to be added to prevent the Imputation of Novelty, Raſhneſs, or Partiality, by which ſome might otherwiſe be apt to be affrighted themſelves, or to terrify others. They are taken from as great Divines as any that have appeared thro the ſeveral Ages of Chriſtianity, and are divided into* four Claſſes.

THE

THE first *contains the Sentiments of ſome of the* moſt eminent, *as well as* moſt antient Fathers *of the Church; and alſo of the* principal Reformers, *who have laid down the ſame Characters of Fundamentals, as are given in this Diſcourſe.*

THE Second *contains ſuch as are taken from* Luther, *and ſeveral* Lutheran Divines, *wherein they expreſs a great deſire of Union and Concord with their* Reformed Brethren, *and earneſtly preſs and plead for it.*

THE Third *contains ſome Paſſages taken out of* Zuinglius, Calvin, *and their Followers, wherein they alſo expreſs a mutual Deſire of Union with their* Lutheran Brethren, *and equally urge it upon them. Yet our* Author *complains under each* Claſs, *that for the moſt part, Men have not been ſo uniform and conſiſtent with ſuch Expreſſions as might be wiſh'd; but produces them as Teſtimonies extorted by the Force of Truth, which has darted into Mens Minds with irreſiſtible Light, when they have calmly and impartially conſidered theſe things.*

THE Fourth *contains ſome* Authentick Acts of Synods *and* Conferences, *which*

have

have been held in divers Places, and ſometimes with Succeſs. Theſe he offers as Inſtances to ſhew the Poſſibility of the thing, that what has been accompliſh'd in ſome Places, may be ſo in others; and that it is not from any Defect in the Scheme laid down, that ſuch a Union is not univerſal.

BUT tho theſe Teſtimonies *may be of conſiderable uſe, and be read with pleaſure, by thoſe who are acquainted with the* Authors *themſelves, yet one can hardly think they would be of any great Advantage, or afford much Entertainment to* Engliſh Readers, *who are not acquainted with the Authors, but muſt take up with ſuch ſhort Quotations from them. As the Argument therefore is entire of itſelf without them, the Tranſlation of them was judged needleſs.*

THE Subject *here treated of is indeed nice and curious, yet handled with great Skill and Sagacity: nor is it of leſs Importance to allay the Heats and Animoſities of all Parties; to put an end to vain and unprofitable Diſputes, and to engage all Chriſtians to exerciſe Meekneſs, Gentleneſs, and Forbearance, which are*

eſſential

essential to Christian Piety, whatever Denominations Men chuse to pass under.

THE Reader likewise from hence will see the Irreconcileableness of Popery *to the true Spirit of* Christianity, *fairly stated; and easily conclude that a Coalition between* Papists *and* Protestants *is impossible and absurd. On the other hand, the Differences between the* Lutherans *and* Calvinists, *are represented in such a light, that one can't but be pleas'd to see so plain and easy a Way opened for the reconciling and uniting them; and be induced to hope that each Side will be forward to advance so good a Work; which were it happily effected, would exceedingly strengthen the* PROTESTANT INTEREST *abroad.*

FROM whence also one may see reason to conclude, that it is not impossible, no, nor very difficult, to compose the Differences among Protestants *here in* Great Britain, *and to unite the various Parties amongst us, in Love and Affection to each other; since the Disagreement of most of these, either from the Establish'd Church, or from each other, is light and inconsiderable, in comparison of the great and substantial*

ſtantial Points of Chriſtianity, wherein they agree: ſo that if Men of Power and Intereſt would impartially ſtand up for Liberty; *if they would reprove ſuch as rail at and abuſe others meerly for differing from them; and if Chriſtians were every where taught* Charity *and* Forbearance *towards their Brethren of different Sentiments; no Diſagreement in Opinions, Ceremonies, or Modes of Worſhip, could hinder ſuch a Union as would be the Glory of the* Proteſtant Intereſt at Home.

AS the former was the more immediate Deſign of the Author *in writing this* Diſcourſe, *ſo is the latter of the* Tranſlator: *And GOD grant it may effectually ſerve the Ends of* Love, Peace, *and* Union *among* Proteſtants, *where-ever it comes.* 4 OC 58

A DISCOURSE CONCERNING Fundamental Articles IN *RELIGION.*

THE Subject of *Fandamental Articles* being as weighty and important as any in Religion; either that our Notions herein may be juſt and right, and that we may be able to diſtinguiſh what is of the Eſſence of Religion, from things which are not Eſſential, nor of equal Importance; or that we may know how to carry it with a pious and chriſtian Moderation, towards thoſe who differ from us in things which are not neceſſary; and not venture to condemn them, to exclude them our Communion, or, as

is uſual with many, to ſend them to the very Pit of Deſtruction: that we may treat of it as briefly and clearly as poſſible, we ſhall divide this Diſcourſe into the following Heads. 1. We ſhall ſhew what is commonly underſtood by Fundamental Articles, and ſuch as are not Fundamental. 2. That there is really ſuch a Diſtinction. 3. We ſhall reject ſome falſe Marks of Fundamentals, and ſuch as will not hold. 4. We ſhall produce thoſe which to us ſeem the beſt and fitteſt. 5. We ſhall conſider, whether it be poſſible to fix a certain and determinate Number of Fundamental Articles. 6. How we ought to carry it towards thoſe who differ from us in Fundamentals. 7. How we ſhould behave towards ſuch who differ from us in things not Fundamental. 8. We ſhall bring an Inſtance of a Fundamental Difference, in our Separation from the Church of *Rome*. 9. An Inſtance of a Difference not Fundamental, in the Differences among Proteſtants. 10. We ſhall offer ſome pacifick and healing Advices, which may be uſeful to promote Union among Chriſtians, leaving them to the Conſideration of all good Men, and Lovers of Peace.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

What we are to underſtand by Fundamental Articles, and ſuch as are not Fundamental. Some Diſtinctions are alſo premis'd to prepare the Way for the following Treatiſe.

FUNDAMENTAL *Articles* (*) are thoſe Principles of Religion, which ſo relate to the Eſſence and Foundation of it, and are of ſo great Importance, that without them Religion cannot ſtand, or at leaſt will be deſtitute of a chief and neceſſary Part. Thus, *There is a God*, is a Fundamental Article, nay the firſt of all; for take away the Exiſtence of God, and all Religion muſt needs fall to the ground. In like manner, *God is a beneficent Being, and will certainly reward his Worſhippers*, is alſo a Fundamental Article; for take away the Goodneſs and Munificence of God, and by far the greateſt Motive to Piety and Virtue is deſtroyed: and therefore the Apoſtle teaches

(*) *Here we take Fundamental Articles to be the ſame with things neceſſary to be known; and don't ſee any Reaſon why* M. J. la Placette, *tho otherwiſe a very learned and judicious Divine, ſhould diſtinguiſh them as he has done, in his* Tract. De fide divina, Noviſſ. Ed. Lib. 4. *contrary to the common Method, and without any ſufficient Grounds, as far as we can diſcern. That judicious Perſon ſeems to carry the Metaphor of a Foundation too far, and labours too much to find different Senſes where things are really the ſame, or at leaſt are dependent on each other.*

us, (*a*) that *he who comes to God*, i. e. worſhips him in any wiſe, *muſt believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them who diligently ſeek him.*

AND ſince Religion, if we are wholly deſtitute of it, or at leaſt if we are deficient in any principal Part of it, cannot yield us its proper Fruits, which are, to render us acceptable to God, and to bring us to eternal Salvation; therefore Fundamental Articles are ſuch as are neceſſary to be known, and believed, in order to obtain the Favour of God, and the Salvation of our Souls.

AGAIN, ſince Religion with all its eſſential Parts is the Bond of Church Communion, hence we may conclude, that Fundamental Articles are ſuch as are neceſſary to be profeſs'd, in order to hold Communion with any particular Perſon, or with any religious Society; for it would be abſurd to admit any into ſuch a Society, who did either directly deny, or in effect deſtroy the Eſſentials, or, as one may call them, the very Vitals of Religion.

THESE are the commonly received Notions that are by the generality of Divines fixed to the Name of Fundamental Articles. Some indeed, the better to diſtinguiſh them, make two ſorts; Fundamentals with *reſpect to Things*, or to Religion itſelf; and Fundamentals with *reſpect to Perſons*. Others make three ſorts, and divide them into things neceſſary to *Salvation*, things neceſſary to *Religion*, and things

(*a*) Heb. XI. 6.

neceſſary

neceſſary to *the Church.* But, tho theſe Diſtinctions may ſometimes be well grounded, and have their uſe, as we ſhall ſee afterwards; yet for the moſt part, and in the ordinary Courſe of Affairs, they all center in one Point, and ſignify only the different Properties and Conſequences of Fundamental Articles. For thoſe which are Fundamental with *reſpect to Things*, or to *Religion itſelf*, are alſo Fundamental with *reſpect to ſuch Perſons*, to whom Religion is duly propos'd, and who are endued with ſufficient Capacities to underſtand and receive it: ſo that without them, in the ordinary Courſe of Affairs, ſuch Perſons cannot be entitled to the Favour of God, nor obtain Salvation, nor be accounted true and ſound Members of the Church. Nor indeed can it better be known what is Eſſential in Religion, or what is requiſite in order to admit a Perſon into Church Communion, any other way, than from thoſe Places of Scripture where the Terms of Salvation are laid down, as will be more fully ſhewn in the Sequel of this Diſcourſe. Therefore paſſing by theſe, let us rather premiſe ſome other Diſtinctions more pertinent to the preſent purpoſe.

1. SINCE the Revelations which have been granted us by God, have been very different; ſome whereof have been more clear and full than others, as is evident, by conſidering the Revelation which is purely from Nature, the Revelation granted to the Patriarchs, the Revelation delivered by *Moſes*, and laſtly the Chriſtian

Chriſtian Revelation; in like manner, Fundamental Articles muſt be underſtood to differ, according to the Difference of theſe Revelations. But our Deſign is principally to treat of the Chriſtian Revelation, and conſequently of ſuch Articles as do, or do not, belong to the Eſſence of Chriſtianity.

2. AS the Revelations made by God have been various, ſo the State and Conditions in which he has placed Men have been ſo likewiſe; the Capacities, the Endowments, and the Circumſtances which have been allotted to them, have varied almoſt infinitely: all which things muſt neceſſarily be regarded, and allowed their due Weight, in deſcribing Fundamental Articles.

3. WE muſt alſo obſerve, that Perſons may offend againſt ſome Points of Religion two ways; either by mere *Ignorance*, or by a direct *Denial* or *Oppoſition*: and both theſe may take their Riſe from different Cauſes, and be attended with different Circumſtances and Effects; ſome whereof may be more criminal, and others more innocent.

4. PERSONS alſo may err fundamentally two ways; either by expreſly denying ſomething that is Fundamental, or by joining ſomething to the Foundation, that does really deſtroy it. In the former manner they ſtumbled at the Foundation, who deny'd the Reſurrection, of whom St. *Paul* ſpeaks (*a*); and in the latter,

(*a*) 1 Cor. XV.

thoſe

thoſe Teachers of the *Galatians*, whom the ſame Apoſtle does ſo ſharply rebuke in his *Epiſtle*.

5. WHEN we ſay that Fundamental Articles are ſuch as are neceſſary to be known and believed, in order to obtain Salvation, we would not be ſo underſtood, as if we thought that none who are ignorant of any one of theſe Articles, or miſtake concerning it, can poſſibly arrive at Salvation: For as in Crimes and evil Actions, ſo likewiſe in Ignorance and Miſtakes, there is a twofold Remedy; the one on our part, which is *Repentance*, either general or particular; the other on God's part, *Mercy* and *Forgiveneſs*: by means whereof, as we may hope for Pardon of the greateſt Crimes; ſo it can't be deny'd, but we may alſo of the moſt grievous Errors.

6. THIS whole Matter may be conſidered in a double reſpect; either as it relates to the *ordinary* Courſe in which things generally proceed, and which God has made known in his Word; or to thoſe *extraordinary* Ways in which God may, and it can hardly be doubted but he oftentimes does act. But here we only ſpeak of the ordinary way, and leave the other to the Wiſdom and good Pleaſure of God.

THESE things being premis'd in the general, the Uſe whereof will appear in what follows; we are next to ſhow, that this Diſtinction of Truths and Errors into Fundamental, and not Fundamental, is not a vain and empty Diſtinction.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That there really are in Religion ſome Articles Fundamental, and others not Fundamental.

THAT there are really ſome Articles in Religion *Fundamental*, and others *not Fundamental*, may be demonſtrated two ways; from the Nature of the thing, and from Scripture.

I. FROM the Nature of the thing. And truly unleſs we will allow this Diſtinction, we muſt ſay one of theſe two things; either that no Truths in Religion are Fundamental, and neceſſary to be known; or that all are ſo: neither of which can be allowed. That no Truths are neceſſary to be known, none but an Atheiſt can venture to affirm; and they who own the Being of a God, can do no leſs ſure, than grant that the Knowledge of Him is neceſſary. The Subjects of any Kingdom or State cannot be ignorant without blame, that there is a Prince, or ſome Civil Magiſtrate under whom they live, and whom they are bound to obey. Nay, further, they ought to have a Knowledge of the Laws of that Kingdom or State; for every one knows, that Ignorance of the Law is no Excuſe. But now, how much more neceſſary is it for us to know, as well as we are able, the Lord of the Univerſe,

Univerſe, and the Laws that are given us by him? And if it be neceſſary to know him, who is Lord of all, then it cannot but be diſpleaſing to him, for us to entertain diſhonourable Notions of him, or to charge him with the moſt deteſtable Crimes, to place him upon a level with the meaneſt of Creatures, and to pay him a Worſhip that conſiſts of Wickedneſs or Cruelty. Neither is it to be thought, that in doing thus, we can poſſibly be innocent, and free from blame. And ſince all this might be ſaid, tho we had no Revelation, how much more are theſe things neceſſary to be known now we have one, wherein God has manifeſted the certain Knowledge of himſelf, and appointed certain Worſhip to be paid him?

BUT on the other hand, that all Truths of Religion are Fundamental, and neceſſary to be known, is ſo abſurd an Imagination, that no Man who ſeriouſly conſiders, can admit of it; for who can ſuppoſe, that God does neceſſarily require all Truths of Religion, without Exception, to be known of every individual Man; and conſequently that all theſe Truths are equally to be eſteemed and regarded by us? Who can imagine, that all Truths which depend upon Chronology, Geography, Criticiſm; that all proper Names in Scripture, and that all Circumſtances, even of the minuteſt Events, which concern Religion, are neceſſary to be known? Certainly the Deſign of Religion, is not to exerciſe the Wit and Underſtandings of Men, nor to burden and overwhelm their Me-

mories with ſo vaſt a Number of all ſorts of Truths; but to implant in their Minds the Fear and Love of God, and excite them to certain Duties. Thoſe Truths therefore, that tend moſt to this End, are certainly of the greateſt Importance; and they that have little or no tendency hereunto, are undoubtedly of leſs Moment, and ſo by no means to be accounted neceſſary.

AGAIN, they who ſay all Truths of Religion are Fundamental, and neceſſary to be known, in order to obtain Salvation, muſt either be tormented with endleſs Doubts and Perplexities, or imagine themſelves to be infallible, ſo as certainly to know all Truths without Exception, and be ſure, that they don't err in the leaſt Point. And what Man in his Wits, can poſſibly pretend to this? Finally, he who ſays all Truths of Religion are Fundamental, and all Errors damnable, ought to prove it: but the thing will admit of no ſort of Proof; nay, on the contrary, the Goodneſs and Wiſdom of God do moſt directly oppoſe ſuch an Aſſertion. Since therefore it cannot be affirmed on the one hand, that no Truths are *Fundamental*, nor on the other, that all are ſo; hence it follows that a difference muſt be made between Truths that are *Fundamental*, and Truths that are not *Fundamental*.

II. THIS is alſo evident from Scripture. For it can't be denied but the Apoſtle (*a*) does make

(*a*) 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11, 12.

a plain

a plain Diſtinction between the *Foundation*, and *things built upon the Foundation*, and proceeds to ſhew, that things built upon the Foundation are of two ſorts: ſome of them are good and profitable to Men; theſe he calls *Gold*, *Silver*, *precious Stones*: others are uſeleſs, and really hurtful, ſuch as vain and idle Diſputes, raſh and haſty Concluſions, and Ceremonies that lead to Superſtition; which he calls *Wood*, *Hay*, and *Stubble*. The former will *ſtand* and abide the fiery Trial, *i. e.* the Judgment of God: but the latter ſhall be *burnt up*; yet the Authors or Promoters of ſuch things, may be ſaved themſelves, *tho ſo as by Fire*, i. e. not without Difficulty.

IN like manner, the Apoſtle diſtinguiſhes (*a*) between things wherein Chriſtians agree, and according to which they ought to walk; and things wherein good Men may differ, without any prejudice to Piety or mutual Love. *Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded*; namely, with regard to what he had before laid down concerning the Privileges and Ceremonies of the Law. *But if in any thing you be otherwiſe minded, God ſhall reveal even this unto you: Nevertheleſs whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the ſame Rule, let us mind the ſame thing*; or be affected in the ſame manner, and preſerve Peace and Union among ourſelves. And accordingly the Apoſtles, in many Places of Scripture, teach us, that ſome things are of ſo great moment, that he who

(*a*) Phil. iii. 15, 16.

errs in them, and departs from the Doctrine of Chriſt, is not only to be ſharply rebuked, but to be removed from the Communion of the Church (*b*). And theſe important Points are ſignified to us by various Appellations in Scripture; they are called, *the Foundation*, *the Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt*, *the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God*, *wholeſome Doctrine*, *the Form of ſound Words*, *the Word of Truth*, *the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs*, &c. And ſo on the contrary, in other Places (*c*), we are told, that there are ſome things in which Perſons who do err, ought nevertheleſs to be borne with as Brethren; of which we ſhall ſpeak more hereafter.

NEITHER is this Diſtinction of the Points of Religion a new Thing, or a Notion peculiar to us; but has been allowed in all Ages, and by Divines of all Parties. The *Jews* undoubtedly had their Fundamental Truths, as appears from the Writings of their Rabbies. So *Moſes Maimonides*, the moſt learned of them, entitles the firſt Book of his Treatiſe, call'd, *The Strong Hand*, thus; *Of the Foundations of the Law*: and begins it with theſe Words; *The Foundation of Foundations, and the Pillar of Wiſdom, is to know, that there is one Firſt Being, which gave being to all others.*

AND among the antient Fathers of the Church, nothing was more common than to

(*b*) Gal. i. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5. 2 John v. 10.
(*c*) *Rom.* xiv. and xv.

uſe

uſe thoſe Words, *the Principles, the Elements, the neceſſary Things*, to ſignify the primary and fundamental Doctrines of the Goſpel. This is what *Tertullian* (*) means, by *the Rule of Faith, the only immoveable and unchangeable Rule, which it is ſufficient for a Man to know, tho he knows no more.* And (†) from theſe primary Articles, wherein *the Foundation of all Catholick Doctrine did conſiſt, they diſtinguiſh'd the leſſer Queſtions of the Divine Law*, concerning which, Perſons might have different Sentiments, without deſtroying the Unity of Faith. And *Juſtin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Auſtin*, &c. give Teſtimonies concerning this Matter, which would be too tedious to recite.

HENCE alſo Creeds and Confeſſions of Faith, and then Catechiſms took their Riſe; which contained the firſt Principles of Religion, ſuch as it was thought proper for Catechumens, or Beginners to profeſs their Belief of. And in the firſt Ages theſe things were ſhort and plain: but afterwards, through the Diſſenſions that aroſe in the Church, they were exceedingly multiplied and enlarged; inſomuch that *Hilary* complained, that *Confeſſions were fram'd at every one's pleaſure.*

THE Papiſts do carefully diſtinguiſh Queſtions which are *of the Faith*, from Queſtions which are *not of the Faith*; and pretend that the Power of determining the former lies in their Church;

(*) *De Virgine velan.* cap. 1. (†) *Vincentius Lirinenſis.*

and

and therefore that ſhe may increaſe or diminiſh the Number of Articles of Faith at pleaſure. And beſides an *implicit* Faith, by which Perſons are bound to believe whatever the Church believes, they ſay that ſome things are alſo to be believed *explicitly*; and accordingly diſpute among themſelves, about theſe Articles of Faith, which are to be believed *explicitly*, ſome making them more, ſome fewer; but others ſay that the Number of them cannot be determined. All which things do plainly ſhew, that tho they don't uſe the ſame Terms as we do, yet they don't reject or condemn the common Diſtinction, of *Fundamentals* and things *not Fundamental*.

Laſtly, This Diſtinction is ſo obvious among Proteſtant Divines of different Parties, and has been ſo generally received amongſt them, that it would be needleſs to mention any. Therefore without any further Confirmation of this famous Diſtinction, let us ſee what are the Marks or Criterions by which we may be able to diſtinguiſh *Fundamentals*, from things which are *not Fundamental*. And we ſhall firſt of all ſeparate the *falſe Marks*, and then offer ſome Rules which appear to us *more juſt*.

CHA

CHAP. III.

False Marks of Fundamental Articles rejected.

1. THE Opinion of the Papists here first presents itself, who pretend that all things which their Church determines *as of the Faith*, do immediately become Articles of Faith; and consequently that the Church may by her Determinations and Decrees, increase the Number of them at pleasure. But this Notion is easily destroy'd. For, *First*, such an Authority was never granted by God, to any Assembly of Men, nor to any private Teachers whatever. *Secondly*, the Apostles themselves confess, that *they had no Dominion over the Faith of Christians*, and that they *delivered nothing to them but what they had received of the Lord* (*a*). *Thirdly*, All Christians are commanded (*b*) to examine whatever their Pastors teach them, *to beware of false Prophets, to try all things, to hold fast that which is good*; and *if an Angel from Heaven, or the Apostles themselves, should preach any other Gospel, to pronounce them accursed.* So that Pastors of the Church have no Power to add even the least Point to the Christian Faith, much less to increase the Number of its Articles

(*a*) 2 Cor. i. 24. (*b*) 1 Cor. xv. 3. Mat. vii. 15. 1 Thes. v. 21. Gal. 1. 8, 9.

at

at pleaſure. *Fourthly*, The Church herſelf, or her Paſtors, are ſo far from having a Power of altering them, or adding to their Number, that the true Church, and true Paſtors thereof, can no otherwiſe be diſtinguiſhed from others, than by conſidering whether they hold the Foundation or depart from it. This Mark therefore which the Papiſts bring, is altogether precarious, nay, Tyrannical and Antichriſtian; for 'tis certainly the greateſt Tyranny, and moſt unſufferable Pride, to aſſume a Power of determining what is neceſſary to be known in order to Salvation, and in a Matter of ſo great Conſequence, to add to the Word of God.

2. OTHERS are of opinion, that whatever is delivered in Scripture, is upon that very account Fundamental: and to this purpoſe they urge the Words of St. *Paul* (*a*), *Whatſoever things were written beforetime, were written for our Inſtruction*; and alſo thoſe (*b*), *All Scripture is given by Inſpiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs*. But as has been already obſerved, who can imagine that all things found in Scripture of whatever ſort, as proper Names of Men, Places, Animals, Plants, *&c.* and all Circumſtances of the moſt minute Actions, are ſo neceſſary to be known, that none can be ſaved without the Knowledge of them? The Words of the Apoſtle carry no ſuch Meaning: for the Senſe of thoſe Places is not that each Sentence

(*a*) Rom. xv. 4. (*b*) 2 Tim. iii. 16.

Word, or Syllable, of Scripture, does contain ſomething in them of the utmoſt Conſequence to Chriſtianity, and ſo that all theſe are neceſſary to be known: But only that the Doctrine contained in that Book, and the principal things deliver'd there, are to be for our Inſtruction above all other things; and that whatever is neceſſary for our Inſtruction, Exhortation, or Correction, is fully contained in it. Yea, the Apoſtle does largely ſhew in another place (*c*) that we ought *to bear the Infirmities of the Weak.* And thoſe Words, *for whatſoever things were written*, &c. are added for no other purpoſe, but to ſhew us, that by the Inſtructions of Scripture we are to learn a Chriſtian Meekneſs and Forbearance; which very thing does prove that Diſagreement in Matters of leſs Importance, altho they are things contained in Scripture, ought not to be accounted Fundamental.

3. Another Mark which many make uſe of, to diſtinguiſh Fundamentals from ſuch as are not ſo, is taken from what they call the *Analogy of Faith*, or, which is the ſame thing, Syſtems of Divinity, in which ſome take one Method, and ſome another. We ſhall only bring an Inſtance or two out of them, to illuſtrate this matter. Some therefore talk after this manner: thoſe things which contain the Cauſes of Salvation, are for that very reaſon neceſſary to be known, in order to Salvation; but ſay theſe Men, in the Cauſes of Salvation, three things are to be diſ-

(*c*) Rom. xv. 4. and all the xivth chap.

tinctly conſidered, the Deſign, the Purchaſe, and the Application of it. The Deſign is laid in God's eternal Predeſtination; the Purchaſe is made through the Merits and Satisfaction of Chriſt, and the Application by the Power and Operation of the Holy Spirit: and then they proceed to infer, that not only theſe things themſelves, but all Queſtions appertaining to them, are neceſſary to be known in order to Salvation. Others argue thus; Chriſt is the Foundation, according to that of the Apoſtle (*a*), *Other Foundation can no Man lay than that is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt*. But ſay they, in Chriſt there are ſeveral things to be diſtinctly conſidered; as, his Perſon, twofold Nature, different States, his Offices, Benefits, *&c.* To which Heads it is very plain, that innumerable Queſtions, if not all in Divinity may eaſily be refer'd. But they who argue in this manner, tho they ſay nothing but what is true, and indeed of very great Moment, yet their Miſtake lies in this; they confound what was neceſſary to be done in order to procure Salvation, with what is neceſſary to be known: which two things are very different; as is plain, by conſidering the Caſe of Infants, of Perſons that are deaf, or diſtracted, and of the Patriarchs in the Old Teſtament. The thing may be illuſtrated by a Similitude taken from our Food: every one knows that abundance of things are requiſite to the Digeſtion and Separation of our Food; and yet no

(*a*) 1 Cor. iii. 11.

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body ever ſaid that theſe things were neceſſary to be known, in order to receive Nouriſhment from it.

HITHERTO we have rejected thoſe Marks, which to us ſeem faulty, by containing too much. There are others no leſs faulty, for requiring too little: From theſe therefore the next Mark is taken, *viz.*

4. THOSE things only are Fundamental, which have been received by all Chriſtians, and in all Ages. If this Rule be right, I fear it will utterly deſtroy all Fundamentals at once; for from the very Times of the Apoſtles, there have been Teachers who have called themſelves Chriſtians, and yet have attempted to overthrow ſome of the principal and moſt neceſſary things in Chriſtianity. Thus ſome have denied the Reſurrection of the Body (*a*), and ſome that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh (*b*); ſome have affirmed that the Ceremonies of the Law are neceſſary to Salvation, and others have even denied the Neceſſity of Good Works; as is evident from many Places in the Epiſtles: So that many of the Teachers of thoſe Times, even of thoſe who called themſelves Chriſtians, are ſaid to be *Antichriſts*, *Lyars*, *falſe Prophets*, *denying the Lord that bought them.* And every one knows, that not long after, there aroſe many peſtilent Sects among Chriſtians; as the *Gnoſticks*, the *Marcionites*, the *Manichees*, who impudently deny'd ſome Doctrines of the utmoſt Impor-

(*a*) 1 Cor. xv. 2 Tim. ii. 18. (*b*) 1 John iv. 3.

tance, as the Unity of God, the Neceſſity of Good Works, and of ſuffering Martyrdom in defence of the Truth when called to it. If this Rule therefore, which we now oppoſe, be true, it will hardly leave any thing at all that is Fundamental.

5. SOME limit the Foundation of Religion within ſuch narrow Bounds, that they allow nothing to be a Fundamental, but to obey the Divine Precepts, and to truſt in the Promiſes of the Goſpel; which is another Mark that we reject. We own indeed, that Obedience is the End, and therefore a principal Part of Religion; for as Chriſt told his Diſciples (*a*), *if ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them*; and St. *Paul* teſtifies (*b*), that *the End of the Commandment is Charity*; and St. *James* (*c*), *Pure Religion and undefiled, is to viſit the Fatherleſs and Widows, and to keep one's ſelf unſpotted from the World.* But if we would ſpeak accurately, we cannot ſay that the whole Eſſence of Religion does conſiſt in Obedience, and Truſt in God, and in nothing elſe: for there muſt be ſome Truths known by the Light of Nature, and others revealed by God, upon which our Obedience and Truſt muſt be founded; which do therefore make part of the Foundation, according as St. *Paul* teaches us in that forecited Place (*d*), *He that comes to God, muſt believe that he is*, &c. And Chriſt (*e*), *This is eternal Life*

(*a*) Joh. xiii. 17. (*b*) 1 Tim. i. 5. (*c*) Jam. 1. 27. (*d*) Heb. xi. 6. (*e*) John xvii. 3.

to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

6. SOME will have the Apostle's Creed, as it is commonly called, to be the Standard and Measure of Fundamentals; and we don't deny but this Hypothesis comes the nearest to Truth, of which more hereafter; yet for some Reasons we cannot entirely acquiesce in this Opinion. For, *First*, It is agreed among learned Men, that this Creed was not compos'd by the Apostles, but long after their Time, and that the Copies of it differ'd in some Articles; there is therefore no reason why so much Authority should be given to a human Composure, tho ever so antient and venerable, as that the Terms of Salvation should be thought to depend upon it. *Secondly*, Neither does every thing inserted into this Creed seem to be of so great Importance, that a Man cannot be saved without the Knowledge thereof. Thus, if a Person should be ignorant of what is there said of Christ's Descent into Hell, of the Name of *Pontius Pilate*, and some other things which were put in, in opposition to some Errors that are now out of date, it cannot be thought that his Salvation would be hazarded hereby. *Thirdly*, On the other hand, there are some things no less necessary to be known than to be done, which yet are wanting in this Creed, *viz.* those Principles of Religion which direct and inform our Practice. Therefore passing by these and such like Criterions, which are not founded upon sufficient Reason, we shall endeavour

endeavour to produce ſome Rules which ſeem to be better grounded, and may more ſafely be depended upon.

CHAP. IV.

Some Principles laid down, by which we may be able to diſtinguiſh Fundamental Articles from thoſe which are not Fundamental.

1. OUR firſt Principle is this; *That we are not under a neceſſary Obligation to know, or believe any Truth, but what is clearly revealed unto us, and for the belief of which, God hath indued us with neceſſary Abilities.* This is a Principle of moſt undoubted Truth; for who can conceive, that a moſt righteous God, who has the tendereſt Concern for his Creatures, ſhould require them to believe any thing which he has not revealed to them, and that clearly too, or which they are under a natural Incapacity of believing? It is reported indeed of *Caligula*, among other horrible Cruelties, that he ordered his Laws to be writ in ſuch ſmall Characters, and to be hung up at ſo great a Diſtance, that it was almoſt, if not altogether impoſſible to read them; and this he contrived on purpoſe, that a greater Number of Offenders might fall into his hands. But far be it from us, to aſcribe ſuch a cruel and injurious Way of pro-

proceeding to the beſt and moſt righteous Being.

FROM this Principle we may draw an Inference which is of very conſiderable Weight, viz. *That Fundamental Articles are not the ſame to all Men, but differ according to the different Degrees of Revelation, and according to the different Capacities and Circumſtances of Men.* The Reaſon is plain: for ſince God has made very different Revelations of himſelf, and has given very different Capacities to Men, and has plac'd them in Stations and Circumſtances that moſt widely differ; it is therefore impoſſible that all Men ſhould be obliged to the ſame Meaſure of Knowledge, or the ſame Standard of Faith.

2. Our ſecond Principle is this, *That he alone, who is Lord of Life and Death, that is, God, has power to determine what is neceſſary to be believed in order to obtain Salvation, and what Error ſhall certainly exclude Men from it.* This alſo is a very plain Principle, and none who ſeriouſly conſider it, can call it into queſtion; for who, I pray, has the leaſt Pretenſions to ſettle the Terms of Life and Death, but that *only Lawgiver who is able to ſave and to deſtroy* (*a*)? From whence the Apoſtle makes this demand, *Who art thou that judgeſt another* (*b*)?

BUT ſince God has made known his Will two ways, by the Light of Nature, and by Revelation, nothing therefore ought to be reckon-

(*a*) James iv. 12. (*b*) Compare Rom. xiv. 10.

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ed a Fundamental, but what God has determined to be ſo, one of theſe two ways.

AND the Light of Nature diſcovers but very few things in this matter; little more than what the Apoſtle takes notice of as a thing ſufficiently known thereby, That *he who comes to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him* (c). And ſhould a Man be well eſtabliſhed in theſe two Principles, and the things which are plainly connected with them, and ſincerely endeavour to know the Will of God, and to put in practice what he did know; I very much queſtion whether ſuch a one could remain ignorant of any Principle which can be proved neceſſary from the Light of Nature.

BUT Revelation goes further, and enjoins ſome Points to be believed as things neceſſary to Salvation, and diſſuades us from believing others upon pain of Damnation. It tells us, *That eternal Life is placed* in the Knowledge of certain Truths; That he who believs them, *does pleaſe God, is bleſſed, and ſhall be ſaved*, &c. but he who does not believe them, ſhall be damned, *cannot pleaſe God, is yet in his Sins*, and *the Wrath of God abides upon him*: from which Places we may conclude, that theſe are Fundamental Articles, and neceſſary to be known of all, to whom the Goſpel is preached, and who are endued with ſufficient Faculties to receive it.

(c) Heb. 11. 6.

3. BUT

3. BUT beſides thoſe Points which are expreſly, and in ſo many words declared to be neceſſary; *Thoſe things likewiſe which flow from theſe Principles, by plain and neceſſary Conſequence, muſt be added to the Catalogue of Fundamentals or Things neceſſary.* For plain and neceſſary Conſequences are of the ſame Nature with their Principles; they are to be ranked with them, and allowed to be of equal Importance; nay, they are as it were contained in them, and properly ſpeaking, do not differ from them. Thus, upon granting the Being of God, the chief Attributes of the Deity do ſo plainly and neceſſarily reſult from it, that they can't but be thought to be of equal Moment with the Principle itſelf.

BUT let it be obſerved, that we ſpeak only of *plain and neceſſary Conſequences*: for it would be very unreaſonable to rank doubtful, or obſcure, or remote Conſequences, with the Principles themſelves, and to ſhew an equal regard to them; for at this rate, all things would be put upon the ſame bottom, and there would be no end of Fundamental Articles.

AND this ſeems to us the true and only Way, by which we may clearly and ſafely diſtinguiſh Fundamental Articles from others, *viz.* by the Diſcovery of the Divine Will, and the Declarations of God himſelf, either in expreſs Words, or by plain and neceſſary Conſequence; for, as has been already obſerved, Who ſhall pretend to ſettle the Terms of Salvation and Damnation? Who ſhall pretend to make Laws concerning theſe things, but He, and He alone who

has power to ſave, and power to deſtroy? And therefore they who impoſe upon Chriſtians, things as Fundamental, which God has not revealed, or which are doubtful and obſcure, as the Church of *Rome* does, and others who follow her Steps; theſe, whoever they are, act tyrannically, and in an impious manner arrogantly claim that Authority to themſelves which belongs to God only.

B U T tho this be the chief, if not the only Mark of Fundamental Articles, yet that we may more eaſily and certainly diſtinguiſh them, we ſhall ſubjoin ſome other Principles.

4. *FUNDAMENTALS are plain, adapted to common Capacities, and free from all the ſubtile and intricate Diſtinctions of the Schools.* The Reaſon is evident; for ſince Religion does equally concern all Men, and is no leſs deſigned for common People than for the Learned, yea, it may be more; whatever therefore does exceed the Capacity of the Vulgar, is upon that account not to be reckoned Fundamental, or neceſſary. Religion certainly differs from ſcholaſtick Niceties as much as any thing: The Scripture was given by poor plain Men, and it is given to ſuch. Chriſt gives thanks, that *theſe things were hid from the wiſe and prudent, and revealed unto Babes:* and St. *Paul* tells us, that there were *not many wiſe among the* Corinthians; by which he diligently admoniſhes us to diſtinguiſh carefully the Doctrines of Heaven from the Wiſdom of the World. So that, to uſe the Words of *Hilary*, *the Faith lies in great*

plainneſs

plainneſs of Speech; for God does not call us to Happineſs by difficult and knotty Queſtions, nor does he perſuade us by various Turns of Oratory and Eloquence. Eternity lies in a plain and narrow Compaſs; to believe that God raiſed Jeſus Chriſt from the dead, and to confeſs that he is Lord (a).

5. *FUNDAMENTALS are few in number.* This Principle is founded upon the ſame Reaſon as the former; for the Minds of common People would be as much confounded by a Multitude, as by the Difficulty of Articles: Therefore it has pleaſed divine Goodneſs to comprize them in a narrow Compaſs; that, as St. *Auſtin* ſays, *the plainneſs of them might ſuit the ſimplicity of the Hearers; that the ſhortneſs of them might be accommodated to their Memories, and that the fulneſs of them might make amends for their want of Learning.* And ſo *Caſaubon*, in the Name of King *James* I. of *Great Britain*, writes thus; *The King thinks it very right, in the Explication of things ſimply neceſſary to Salvation, to ſay that the Number of them is not great* (b).

6. *FUNDAMENTALS are very often and various ways repeated and inculcated in Scripture.* This is a Rule that we infer from the Goodneſs and Condeſcenſion of God: for ſince Scripture is given for this end only, to make us wiſe to Salvation, it can't be doubted but thoſe things that chiefly tend hereunto, are frequently propoſed in Scripture, and ſtrongly urged up-

(a) *Hilarius de Trinitate* L. 10. *in fin.* (b) *Caſaub. Epiſt. ad Card. Perron.*

on us. In any other Sciences, honeſt and skilful Maſters do not uſe to paſs over ſlightly and haſtily, the firſt Principles; but frequently repeat and inculcate them, till they find they are clearly underſtood, and have taken faſt root in the Minds of their Scholars. And who can doubt but God, the ſupreme and infinitely wiſe Inſtructor of Men, does uſe the like Caution and Prudence, in giving them his heavenly Precepts?

7. *FUNDAMENTALS are Principles of Piety; that is, they don't only not contradict the Practice of Godlineſs, but on the contrary, are uſeful, and even neceſſary to promote it.* And truly the End of Religion is nothing elſe but to make us holy. This is the Deſign of the whole Goſpel; herein the Myſteries, the Precepts, the Promiſes, and Threatnings of it do all centre: upon which account the Goſpel is called, *The Myſtery of Godlineſs, a Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs*; and we are aſſured that nothing elſe will avail us but *the new Creature*, or *Obedience to the Commandments of God.* Hence then it follows, that whatſoever is of no uſe to promote Godlineſs, for that very reaſon is not a Fundamental Truth; and on the other hand, that whatever deſtroys Godlineſs, or is inconſiſtent therewith, is a Fundamental Error. But let it be obſerved, we don't ſay, that whatever may conduce to Godlineſs, is therefore a Fundamental; for there are many things which may be pious, or at leaſt have the appearance of Piety, that are not at all eſſential to Chriſtianity;

anity; nay, and if throughly examined into, ſome of them would not be found true, of which ſort are the many Fables and Figments of Mens Brains; which the Experience of all Ages abundantly ſhews.

8. *A thing may often be Fundamental itſelf, tho the Mode and Circumſtances of it are not ſo.* This follows from the foregoing Principles; for when a thing is only revealed to us in general, and enjoined us by God as neceſſary, then the thing itſelf only is to be accounted a Fundamental without its Mode and Circumſtances, which are not revealed with equal Evidence, or the like Marks of Neceſſity. And indeed there are very few things, eſpecially in Divinity, the Mode and Circumſtances of which we can throughly underſtand. If therefore the Mode and Circumſtances, the Cauſes and Adjuncts of a thing, are to be accounted Fundamental, it will follow that abundance of things, of which we can have no clear Perceptions, and which do far exceed our Capacities, are nevertheleſs Fundamental, contrary to what has been obſerved, in *Prin.* 1 and 4.

9. *PERSONS may err fundamentally two ways; not only by expreſly denying a thing that is Fundamental, but alſo by adding to, or building ſomething upon the Foundation that does really weaken and overturn it.* This Principle we have already treated of, *Chap.* I. and the Reaſon of it is evident; for 'tis not ſufficient to acknowledge Fundamental Truths with our Lips, if we actually overturn them, by Poſitions or Actions contrary to them.

Thus,

Thus, what can it ſignify for a Man to profeſs that God only is to be worſhipped, if at the ſame time he does actually worſhip Creatures, as Saints and Angels, Images, Croſſes, *&c.* after the manner of the Heathens themſelves?

10. TO theſe Principles, which ſeem to contribute not a little towards a right diſtinguiſhing of Fundamentals, let us only add one more, which may ſerve as a Rule to manage and form our Judgments, both of ourſelves and others; namely, *With reſpect to ourſelves, our ſafeſt way is to beware and guard againſt all, even the ſmalleſt Errors, as if they were Fundamental; and to make the utmoſt progreſs in the Knowledge of divine Truths; but with regard to others, we ought to pronounce nothing but with the utmoſt Caution, the greateſt Charity, and Meekneſs.* For as Prudence directs Men to uſe the greateſt Care and Diligence in providing for their own Safety; ſo on the contrary, Chriſtian Charity will not ſuffer a Man to condemn others, and charge them with damnable Errors, till he is compell'd to it by the irreſiſtible Evidence of the thing itſelf, and of the Oracles of God; and then not without Unwillingneſs and great Reluctance.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Whether the exact Number of Fundamental Articles can be determin'd.

THIS Queſtion is a very perplex'd one, yet ought not to be wholly omitted by us, *viz. Whether the exact and preciſe Number of Fundamental Articles can be determin'd.* We doubt not, but thoſe Articles may be ſufficiently diſtinguiſh'd by every one for his own private Uſe and Inſtruction; and accordingly have laid down Rules in the foregoing *Chapter*, which will help us to a Knowledge of them: But to reduce them to a certain and definite Number, ſo as to be able to ſay there are neither more nor leſs, is more than we, together with all Proteſtant Divines, think to be either neceſſary or poſſible, for the following Reaſons.

1. BECAUSE theſe Articles are not the ſame to all Men; ſome were Fundamental under the Old Teſtament, others are ſo under the New. Some are Fundamental to thoſe who have the uſe of their Senſes and Reaſon; others to Infants, Children, deaf Perſons, and thoſe of a weak Underſtanding. Some are Fundamental to thoſe who enjoy a perfect Liberty of hearing the Word of God; others are ſo to multitudes in the World, from whom the Goſpel is in a great

great meaſure hid, as thouſands of Peaſants inhabiting the Villages of *Spain* and *Portugal*. Some are Fundamental to Beginners, and as it were Children in Chriſt; others to Perſons of a greater Proficiency, ſuch as thoſe *Jews* ought to have been, whom the Apoſtle reproves for their Dulneſs in Learning (*a*). So that as it would be abſurd to expect that one common Garment ſhould ſuit all Statures, or the ſame Portion of Food all Appetites, or the ſame Degrees of Labour all Artiſts; ſo it is impoſſible to fix a certain Number of Articles neceſſary to be known of all Men.

2. BECAUSE theſe Articles are ſometimes fewer and more general, ſometimes more numerous and particular; which depends upon the different Method of conceiving and diſtinguiſhing things. Thus in Scripture we find things neceſſary to Salvation are ſometimes reduced to a ſingle Head, ſometimes to two, ſometimes to more. In one place we are told that nothing is neceſſary to be known by us, *but Chriſt crucified* (*b*); in another, that *eternal Life conſiſts in knowing the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath ſent* (*c*). Sometimes all things are refer'd to *Chriſt's Reſurrection alone*; at other times only *to his coming in the Fleſh*. Sometimes *Faith* alone is required; at other times *Faith and Repentance*: ſometimes *Faith that works by Love*, ſometimes *a new Creature*, and ſometimes the whole Law is ſaid to

(*a*) Heb. v. 12. (*b*) 1 Cor. ii. 2. (*c*) John xvii. 3.

be

be fulfilled in *Charity* only. All which ſufficiently ſhews, that things neceſſary to Salvation are ſometimes reduced to fewer Heads, and at other times divided into more; and therefore can't be fixed to a certain Number, which ſhall always neceſſarily remain the ſame.

3. BECAUSE it may oftentimes be juſtly queſtioned, whether any particular Doctrine ought to be placed among Fundamentals; as a Conſequence drawn from an important Place of Scripture, or a particular Expoſition of ſome general Doctrine. Examples might be brought from moral Subjects. Thus many difficult Queſtions have been ſtarted about Uſury, Lying, Gaming, of the Meaſure we ought to obſerve in giving Alms, and many other ſuch things. And if ſo many Difficulties ariſe about Subjects of a practical Nature, how ſhould it be otherwiſe in Matters that are ſpeculative? And who, but a Perſon of conſummate Aſſurance, would venture to determine the exact Weight and Importance of each of theſe Queſtions, and to ſettle their preciſe Bounds, with reſpect to our Salvation or Damnation?

4. AS it can't certainly be determin'd, what is the exact Pitch of Vertue, or juſt how many ſorts of Duties, what number of good Works, pious Diſcourſes, Almſdeeds, *&c.* are neceſſarily required of every Man that he may be ſaved; ſo either can ſuch weak and imperfect Creatures as we are, without the utmoſt Arrogance, pretend to determine preciſely, what Degrees of Knowledge are abſolutely requiſite

hereunto. Let them tell us what are the fartheſt Lengths allowable in theſe things; let them mark out the exact Bounds of things neceſſary, and unneceſſary, who can comprehend the Divine Perfections, and know the utmoſt Limits of the Juſtice and Mercy of God. For our part, we freely own it is far above our reach to do it. And here, to uſe the Words of the famous *Witſius* (*a*), *ſometimes* (ſays he) *Divine Grace does join the Elect to Chriſt, by a very ſlender Thred; and yet the brighteſt Flames of Love to God, and the moſt ſincere Deſires to pleaſe him, may be kindled in thoſe Souls that have but a very poor Knowledge of Articles of Faith. And who is he, that without the Determinations of God, can himſelf exactly determine that leaſt ſingle Point in each Article, by which the Divine Tribunal is indiſpenſably obliged to proceed?*

5. WHAT has been ſaid concerning Religion, and the neceſſary Articles of it, may be illuſtrated from other Arts and Sciences. Who, for inſtance, ever told us preciſely, how many Truths are neceſſary to be known, to get a Man a Reputation in Logick, or Mathematicks, or Law? Or who has ever determin'd the preciſe Quantity of Food, and no more, that is neceſſary to ſupport Life? And yet there is no great danger of our being ſtarved for want of this Knowledge. Or who has ever told us how many ſorts of Food, and how many ſorts of Poiſons there are in the World? And yet with-

(*a*) *Witſ. in Symb. Apoſt. Exercit.* II. §. 15.

out

out knowing it, we may take our Food ſafely enough, and ſufficiently guard againſt being poiſoned. And why may not the ſame Judgment be allowed concerning ſaving Truths, and poiſonous Errors?

BUT perhaps ſome will ſay, how can the Conſcience of a Chriſtian be eaſy, without being ſatisfied in this Enquiry, *How many Truths preciſely he ought to know, that he may be ſaved?* I'll anſwer in a word: Let a Man but ſincerely love Truth, and ſeek it heartily, begging Help from God, and making uſe of thoſe who are capable of giving him Light; and let him not omit, or neglect any proper Means, that he may make continual Progreſs in the Ways of Truth and Holineſs; and ſuch a one may certainly conclude, that God will not be wanting to him, nor ſuffer him to continue ignorant of any thing neceſſary for him to know: Or if he is ignorant of any Matter, or does err and miſtake in ſome things, God will graciouſly pardon him, even as a Father does his Children.

CHAP. VI.

Church Communion cannot be maintain'd between thoſe who differ in Fundamentals.

WE are now to conſider how we ought to carry it, either towards thoſe who *differ from us in Fundamentals*, or towards thoſe who *differ in things not Fundamental.*

AS to the former, there is no doubt but that all juſt and proper Means ought to be uſed with them, to convince them of their Errors, and to bring them to a ſound Mind; but if theſe prove ineffectual, and we cannot converſe with them, without apparent danger of being infected ourſelves, we ought not only to abſtain from the private Converſation of ſuch Perſons, but alſo from their Church Communion.

THERE are ſeveral expreſs Commands in Scripture to this purpoſe, beſides many weighty Reaſons, which might be brought to confirm it.

AMONG other Places of Scripture, theſe are very evident: (*a*) *Tho we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Goſpel to you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accurſed.* (*b*) *Be ye not unequally yoked together with Unbelievers; for what Fellowſhip has Righteouſ-*

(*a*) Gal. i. 8, 9. (*b*) 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15.

neſs

neſs with Unrighteouſneſs? And what Communion has Light with Darkneſs? And what Concord has Chriſt with Belial? Or what part has he that believeth with an Infidel? Or what Agreement has the Temple of God with Idols? Theſe Words are indeed primarily meant of Unbelievers and Heathen Idolaters; but yet they may equally be underſtood of thoſe who imitate the Heathen in their Idolatry and Superſtition. (*c*) *Now I beſeech you, Brethren, mark thoſe which cauſe Diviſions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them.* (*d*) *If any Man teach otherwiſe, and conſent not to wholeſome Words, even the Words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs, he is proud, knowing nothing; from ſuch withdraw thy ſelf.* (*e*) *An Heretick, after the firſt and ſecond Admonition, reject.* (*f*) *If there come any unto you and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your Houſe, neither bid him God ſpeed; for he that biddeth him God ſpeed, is partaker of his evil Deeds.* (*g*) *And I heard another Voice from Heaven, ſaying, come out of her my People, that ye be not partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues.*

AND there are ſeveral weighty Reaſons which might be brought to confirm this Matter; from the Nature of the Church; from the Regard we owe to God; from the Decency and Order of Divine Worſhip; from the Care we

(*c*) Rom. xvi. 17. (*d*) 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5. (*e*) Tit. iii. 10.
(*f*) 2 John v. 10, 11. (*g*) Rev. xviii. 4.

ought

ought to take of our own Souls; from the Obligation we are under to do all we can towards recovering the Erroneous, and to give a good Example to others: But theſe things we can but barely mention, conſiſtent with our deſigned Brevity.

CHAP. VII.

Church Communion ought to be maintained, and mutual Forbearance practis'd among thoſe who differ not in Fundamentals.

THE Caſe is much otherwiſe with reſpect to thoſe who *differ only in Points not Fundamental.* It were indeed greatly to be deſired, that there was no Diſagreement at all among Chriſtians, and that the Truths of God were equally diſcovered and known of all Men: but ſince this is never to be expected, becauſe of the Variety of Mens Minds, the different Methods of Education, and the Frailty of human Underſtanding; that which comes the neareſt to it, is, That we ſhould endeavour to ſecure the Eſſence of Religion, and then patiently bear with one another in all the reſt; and that Perſons who differ in things not Fundamental, ſhould regard each other as Brethren, and maintain Church Communion together, and ſhew a Chriſtian Forbearance on all ſides. To this purpoſe

purpoſe there are plain Texts of Scripture, and many other Arguments of the greateſt Force.

AND among other Places of Scripture where ſuch Forbearance is enjoined, *Chap.* 14. and part of 15. of the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, deſerve our greateſt regard: where the Apoſtle, taking occaſion from the Differences that aroſe among the primitive Chriſtians, about the Ceremonies of the Law, and the Diſtinctions of Meats and Days, commands that *the weak in Faith*, i. e. thoſe who had not right Sentiments of theſe things, ſhould nevertheleſs be received by the reſt as Brethren, and admitted as true Members of the Church, not *deſpis'd* nor *condemn'd*, but *their Infirmities* tolerated (*a*.) And that he might bring the *Roman* Chriſtians to ſuch a Temper, he argues with them ſo affectionately, ſo ſtrongly and copiouſly, and draws ſuch odious Conſequences from the contrary Practice, (ſhewing them that hereby the Authority of God himſelf would be invaded, that *thoſe for whom Chriſt died would be deſtroyed*, and that *the Work of God would be deſtroyed*, &c.) as plainly ſhews how much he had this at heart, and that this Forbearance of diſagreeing Parties ought to be ranked among the firſt, and moſt important Duties of the Chriſtian Religion.

AND not only in that Place, but in ſeveral Parts of his Epiſtles, he earneſtly recommends the ſame Duty. Thus in *Chap.* viii. 9, 10. of the 1ſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, diſcourſing of

(*a*) Rom. XIV. 1, 3, 4, 10. XV. 1.

things

things ſacrificed to Idols, he ſhews that Chriſtians who had not right Sentiments, ought not only to be patiently borne with, but that others ought to accommodate themſelves to their Weakneſs; and teſtifies of himſelf, that this was his own Practice (*a*): *For tho I am free from all Men, yet have I made myſelf Servant to all, that I might gain the more: and unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the Law, as under the Law; that I might gain them that are under the Law; to them that are without Law, as without Law; to the Weak became I as weak, that I might gain the Weak: I am made all things to all Men, that I might by all Means ſave ſome.* And in the following Verſes he ſignifies that he was obliged thus to act, in order to his being Partaker of the heavenly Reward. Whence it follows, that let a Man be ever ſo religious, and take ever ſo much pains in preaching the Goſpel, yet if at the ſame time he wants this Gentleneſs and Forbearance towards his Brethren who differ from him, he can neither be accepted of God, nor obtain Salvation at laſt.

AND who that reads that excellent Commendation of Charity, with which the whole 13th *Chapter* of that Epiſtle is taken up, can chuſe but be excited to practiſe this Duty of Forbearance? Some of the chief Characters there given of Charity, are, (*b*) *that it ſuffers*

(*a*) 1 Cor. IX. 20, 21, 22. (*b*) V. 4, 7.

long,

long, that it beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. And if this Deſcription be given with reſpect to the Vices of Men, and their Defects in Goodneſs, it's certainly no leſs applicable to Errors, eſpecially to light ones, and ſuch as do not at all affect the Foundation of Religion.

IT is true indeed, the Apoſtle in his Epiſtle to the *Galatians*, is very ſevere againſt ſome falſe Teachers; which yet does not weaken, but really confirm the Neceſſity of this Forbearance and Toleration. For thoſe Teachers were themſelves againſt tolerating others, and would have the Ceremonies of the Law impoſed upon all Chriſtians, as things neceſſary to Salvation; by which means the Chriſtian Faith would have been greatly corrupted. And at the ſame time that he ſo ſharply inveighs againſt theſe Teachers, he is very large in recommending Charity and Forbearance, even in ſo great a Diverſity of Opinions as this was (*b*); and commands *that they who were overtaken in a Fault, ſhould be reſtor'd in the Spirit of Meekneſs*; and that *they ſhould bear one another's Burdens* (*c*). And at laſt, when he had told them that the Eſſence of Chriſtianity did not conſiſt in *Circumciſion*, or *Uncircumciſion*, i. e. in obſerving or omitting the Ceremonies of the Law, *but in the New Creature*, i. e. in true and real Holineſs; he adds theſe Words, wherein he moſt affectionately de-

(*b*) Gal. V. 13, 14, 15. (*c*) Gal. VI. 1, 2.

ſires, as well as commands, a mutual Forbearance among Perſons who differ in things not Fundamental; *and as many as walk according to this Rule*, i. e. that agree in the Eſſentials of Chriſtianity, and form their Lives according to this Rule, *Peace be upon them, and Mercy, and upon the Iſrael of God* (*a*). If therefore the Apoſtle does pray for Peace, and promiſes Mercy to ſuch Perſons, is it not unreaſonable to condemn them, to ſend them to the Pit of Hell, or to exclude them the Communion of the Church?

BUT there is no Place where this Forbearance or Toleration of Perſons diſagreeing only in things not Fundamental, is more plainly enjoined, than that which has been already cited out of the Epiſtle to the *Philippians* (*b*), where every one may ſee that the Apoſtle would have *Chriſtians walk by the ſame Rule in things whereto they have attained*, that is, in Fundamentals; and *to mind the ſame thing*; *but if in any thing they were otherwiſe minded, to wait* till God ſhould pleaſe *to reveal it to thoſe* who were in an Error, and bring them to a more perfect Knowledge of the Truth; yet in the mean time holding faſt the Bond of Chriſtian Fellowſhip and Charity with one another. In like manner, that pathetick Exhortation to Love and Unity, which we have in the beginning of the ſecond Chapter of the ſame Epiſtle, is given for the ſame end.

(*a*) Gal. VI. 15, 16. (*b*) Phil. III. 15, 16.

And

And laſtly, the Apoſtle enjoins it upon Chriſtians (*a*), *to let their Moderation be known unto all Men*, i. e. their Meekneſs and Gentleneſs in bearing the Infirmities and Deficiencies of others.

AND no doubt theſe Exhortations *to forbear one another with all Lowlineſs and Meekneſs, to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, to ſpeak the Truth in Love, to put away all Bitterneſs, Wrath, Anger, Clamour, Evil-ſpeaking, and to put on Bowels of Mercies, Kindneſs, Humbleneſs of Mind, Meekneſs, Long-ſuffering, that ſo they might forbear one another, and forgive one another* (*b*); no doubt, I ſay, but theſe, and ſuch like Exhortations, of which all the Epiſtles are full, were principally deſigned to lay the Heats and Contentions between the Judaizing and other Chriſtians, with which the Churches of thoſe Times were greatly moleſted; the proper Remedy for which, if we regard the Apoſtles, was nothing elſe but mutual Forbearance, which Chriſtians ought to exerciſe when differing from one another.

AND if we turn our Thoughts to the following Circumſtances, we ſhall plainly perceive of how great Weight theſe things are, to recommend the like Forbearance among Chriſtians in theſe Days. 1. The Apoſtles were infallible, and if they would not attempt to compoſe theſe Differences, by exerting their Au-

(*a*) Phil. IV. 5. (*b*) Epheſ. IV. 2. 3, 15, 31, 32. Col. III. 12, 13.

thority, but choſe to recommend Forbearance on both ſides, how much more ſhould we take the like Courſe, who have not the leaſt Pretences to Infallibility? 2. The Diſpute was not about a Trifle, but a very weighty Affair, even the Difference between the Law and the Goſpel; a thing that did not conſiſt in meer Speculation, but had a great Influence both upon Practice and Worſhip. Alas! How many trivial Controverſies, in compariſon of this, do ſoure the Minds of Chriſtians in theſe Days? 3. Both Sides were furniſhed with very conſiderable Arguments, the one a Law given by God, the other the Defence of Chriſtian Liberty. 4. St. *Paul* himſelf, who ſo ſtrenuouſly urged this Forbearance, had before ſuch a flaming Zeal for the Law, that he was even mad for it. 5. *Laſtly*, theſe Precepts of Forbearance were given after the Viſion from Heaven to *Peter*, and after the Apoſtolic Synod; ſo that theſe Controverſies had been ſufficiently determined already, by this Viſion, and by the Decree of the Apoſtles. Whoever therefore ſhall ſeriouſly conſider theſe Circumſtances, and weigh them impartially, can't ſurely but conclude, that theſe Apoſtolical Precepts of Forbearance, if they had any Weight in their Times, ought to have much more in our Times, and in the preſent Controverſies.

IN ſhort, wherever Chriſt and his Apoſtles recommend Charity, Meekneſs, or the Love of Peace; and on the contrary diſſuade us from Contentions, Quarrels and Schiſms, *&c.* in all

 thoſe

thoſe Places, it is moſt certain this Forbearance is enjoined us. But that the Neceſſity of it may more clearly appear, we ſhall add to theſe Teſtimonies of Scripture, ſome Reaſons of very great Weight, which we ſhall but juſt mention, and leave the fuller Explication of them to the judicious and pious Reader.

1. IT is our Duty to cultivate Communion with all the Diſciples of Chriſt; for Chriſt will have all his Diſciples to be one (*a*), and the Church is repreſented as *one Body*, in ſeveral Places of Scripture: Therefore Communion ought to be maintain'd with all thoſe whom we don't know to be unworthy the Name of Chriſtians: And certainly they can't be accounted unworthy of it, who hold all the Fundamentals, and differ from us only in things which are not Fundamental.

2. THOSE things wherein Chriſtians do agree, who are united in Fundamentals, are things of ſo great Importance, and Dignity, that all other things are not conſiderable enough to diſturb their Peace, and to ſeparate them from one another. This Argument the Apoſtle purſues with a great deal of Life and Spirit, in the Epiſtle to the *Epheſians* (*b*); and nothing, I think, can more effectually preſs this Duty of Forbearance, than what he there ſaith: *I* (ſays the Apoſtle) *the Priſoner of the Lord, beſeech you that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye*

(*a*) John XVII. 11, 21, 22, 23. (*b*) Eph. IV. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

are

are called, with all Lowlineſs, and Meekneſs, with Long-ſuffering, forbearing one another in Love; endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. For, adds he, *There is one Body and one Spirit, even as you are called in one Hope of your Calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm; one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* If Perſons agree with us in ſuch things as theſe, and are impreſs'd with the Weight and Importance of them as they ought to be, we ſhall be injurious to ourſelves, and reflect Diſhonour upon Chriſt, if we refuſe to own and eſteem them as Brethren.

3. WITHOUT this Forbearance, which we recommend, it is impoſſible that any Peace or Unity ſhould continue long in the Church: For there are but two Ways of obtaining Peace, either by *Uniformity* of *Opinion*, or by exerciſing *Forbearance* towards thoſe who err in ſmaller Matters. The former is an impracticable thing; for ſuch is the Variety of Mens Minds, their Education and Capacities ſo different, and things themſelves do often appear in ſuch different Views, that for all Perſons to have juſt the ſame Sentiments in all Points, is a thing utterly to be deſpair'd of: It has never yet been ſeen from the firſt beginnings of the Church, unto the preſent times, nor ever will to the World's End. We muſt therefore have recourſe to Forbearance of thoſe who err in leſſer Matters, as ever we deſire to ſee the Church enjoy Peace and Tranquillity.

4. EITHER

4. EITHER we are to break off Communion for all, and every Diverſity of Opinion; or for ſome only. No one will ſay the former; for at this rate, there would be as many Churches and Sects in the World, as there are private Chriſtians. But if for ſome only, what other Bounds or Diſtinction can be ſettled than this; that thoſe things which belong to the Eſſence and Foundation of Religion, ſhould be inviolably adhered unto; but that things which do not concern the Foundation, ſhould be left as Matters of Forbearance?

5. EITHER we believe that thoſe who differ from us in things not Fundamental, are odious to God, and ſhall be damned, or we do not: And certainly it would diſcover a very bitter Spirit, and the utmoſt Raſhneſs, to judge the former; but if we believe the latter, Why ſhould we hate and reject them? If we believe that God does accept them as Children, why ſhould not we regard them as Brethren? If we believe they will praiſe God with us in Heaven, why ſhould we be unwilling that they ſhould worſhip him with us on Earth?

6. EITHER we believe that all things in Religion are at preſent fully made known, and that there is no room left for any further Diſcoveries; or we believe that there may be ſome Improvements of Knowledge, and that it's poſſible ſome Amendments may be made to the common received Opinions. To ſay the former would be exceeding raſh, and a Suppoſition not conſiſtent with the State of human Affairs; nay,

nay, ſuch a Piece of intolerable Pride, as has always met with Indignation from Men truly learned; for *now we know but in part*, and *propheſy in part*, as the Apoſtle ſays. If therefore Improvements may yet be made, we ought by all means to bear patiently with thoſe that offer us any thing new; for otherwiſe we ſuppreſs all Improvements, and ſtifle the Gift of Prophecy, and bring in Sloth and Barbarity; for who will attempt any thing of this kind, when it becomes dangerous to do it?

7. THE want of this Forbearance does not really remove Differences of Opinion, but only makes Perſons who differ from the received Notions, to conceal their Sentiments, yea, and very often to ſpeak contrary to the Senſe of their Minds; which is ſuch a Reproach to good Men, and eſpecially to Miniſters of the Goſpel, as can never be ſufficiently lamented. But it will be ſaid, that this is their Fault who do ſo; and undoubtedly it is: but yet they can never be thought innocent, who, by vigorous Severities, lay ſuch ſtrong Temptations before Men to Hypocriſy.

8. TOLERATION is the greateſt Friend to Truth, and the contrary its greateſt Enemy; for if the Strong will not bear with the Weak, neither will the Weak bear with the Strong; for every Man counts himſelf ſtrong, and thus all will come to condemn, and to execute one another: by which Means Truth itſelf will be baniſhed out of many Parts of the World. On the contrary, if Toleration did every

every where prevail, Truth would have its full Scope, and eaſily gain ground, by the Force of its own Arguments.

9. GENTLENESS and Forbearance is the moſt likely Method to bring thoſe that err, to an acknowledgment of the Truth, and the contrary Method no leſs likely to hinder both their Inſtruction and Amendment: For by condemning and baniſhing them our Communion, we make them to hate us, and to ſuſpect every thing whatever we offer to them; but if we deal gently with them, and ceaſe not to own them as Brethren, they will regard us as their Friends, and more readily and impartially conſider what we propoſe for their Conviction.

10. FROM want of this Forbearance, ariſe Hatred, Strife, Quarrels, and Schiſms in Churches and Univerſities, and Tumults in Civil Society. Perhaps it may be ſaid, that Schiſms are more likely to ariſe from the Toleration of different Opinions; but if the thing be duly conſidered, it will appear that all theſe Evils have ariſen not from Toleration or Forbearance, which is in itſelf a meek and harmleſs thing, but from a contrary Spirit, which if once laid aſide, Perſons might at any time entertain different Sentiments, and yet preſerve a hearty Love for one another.

11. PRIVATE Chriſtians, but eſpecially Miniſters, who are engaged and taken up in theſe Controverſies, are obliged to neglect ſeveral things, wherein their Labour might be employed to much better Purpoſe, and where it

is more needed; but eſpecially the Life of Religion does greatly ſuffer and decay by this means.

12. WANT of this Forbearance does make the different Sects of Chriſtians forget to ſtand up for one another, and ſo to diſregard, and even give up the common Intereſt. Therefore the Emperor *Julian*, that he might engage Chriſtians in their mutual Deſtruction, ſent for the chief Heads of the different Sects, and ſet them on quarrelling together; knowing well enough, as (*a*) *Ammianus Marcellinus* teſtifies, *That no ſavage Beaſts are more cruel to Men, than moſt Chriſtians are to others.* And ſurely no one can be ignorant, how much the Proteſtant Cauſe has been weakned, by inteſtine Diviſions.

13. THESE Differences and Animoſities give great Offence: Wicked Men take occaſion from them to ſcoff at Chriſtianity, and ſay that Chriſtians have no ſuch thing as Certainty in what they believe; but are continually quarrelling, and tearing one another to pieces, upon Controverſies of every kind. It is ſufficiently known, with what Boaſt and Inſult, a late Sceptic attack'd the various Schemes concerning Predeſtination, and made his uſe of the too great Rigor with which that Argument is generally treated.

14. THEY who are againſt tolerating Errors, which are not Fundamental, muſt think

(*a*) *Ammianus Marcellinus*, Lib. XXII. Cap. 5.

them-

themſelves infallible: for if they thought themſelves liable to err, they would alſo think that they ſtood as much in need of Forbearance as other Perſons; and therefore would readily allow the ſame Privilege to others, and ſay with the Poet,

This Freedom too we mutually allow.
Hor. Art of Poetry, Ver. 11.

15. IF Indulgence ought to be allowed to Faults and Crimes of a leſſer Nature, (which none will deny) why not alſo to Errors of equal degree? What! are moral Vices and Crimes of a leſs heinous and offenſive Nature, than inaccurate Notions about things ſublime and obſcure, which ſometimes only reſide in the Underſtanding, without having any evil Influence upon practice?

16. BESIDES, the Neceſſity of this Forbearance is confirmed from the Example of God himſelf, who does with ſuch admirable Patience and Goodneſs, bear with the Infirmities of Men, and who has manifeſted remarkable Gentleneſs and Forbearance in all his Revelations and Diſpenſations. When he accommodated himſelf to the groſs Notions of the *Jews*, and treated and argued with them after the manner of Men, what was this but the moſt gracious Condeſcenſion, in bearing with their childiſh Notions, till he had brought them to more manly Thoughts? And every conſiderate Perſon will find more In-

ſtances than one of this Nature in the Chriſtian Revelation.

17. THIS Forbearance is alſo enforced by the Example of Chriſt. How many Errors did he bear with, in his Apoſtles and Diſciples, until the Spirit deſcended like Fire upon them, and purged them away; as their Errors about the Nature of his Kingdom, about his Death, Ceremonies, the calling of the Gentiles, *&c.* The Apoſtles in many Caſes had but *little Faith*; and yet with admirable Gentleneſs and Patience, he bears with their weak Faith.

18. THIS Forbearance is alſo recommended to us from the Example of the Apoſtles, who, tho they were infallible, as we have ſeen before, yet exerciſed Forbearance themſelves, and enjoined the Practice of it upon others.

19. AND herein they were imitated by their Succeſſors, the Fathers of the Primitive Church, at leaſt by the beſt and wiſeſt of them, whoſe many Differences of Opinions, and Rites, did not diſturb the Peace of the Churches; as particularly *Socrates* (*a*) has ſhewn. And therefore if any aroſe, who too rigorouſly condemned their Brethren, and refuſed them Communion; as *Victor* about the Obſervation of *Eaſter*, and *Stephen* in the Diſpute concerning the Baptiſm of *Hereticks*; others ſtood up and oppoſed ſuch unchriſtian Attempts, and never ſcrupl'd to rebuke them ſharply for ſuch things. I confeſs Perſecution gain'd ground, with other Evils

(*a*) *Hiſt. Eccleſ.* Lib. V. cap. 22.

that

that ſprung up in the Church, till at laſt Anathema's and Excommunications were thundred out for the meereſt Trifles, without end; and what innumerable Evils aroſe from hence, every one knows: But Chriſt never gave his Diſciples any ſuch Inſtructions; and the firſt and beſt Teachers of Chriſtianity took no ſuch Methods.

Laſtly, To add no more, the Divines of latter Times, who have juſtly been reputed Men of Learning and Wiſdom, do all agree with us in this Matter. I ſhall only mention two out of abundance, the one of *Zurich*, the other of *Bern*. The former is the famous *John Wirtzius*, who in the middle of the laſt Century, was Profeſſor of Divinity in the Univerſity of *Zurich*. He ſays (*a*), *The Foundation of the Fellowſhip and Communion of Saints upon Earth, is* the one God and Father, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm; *and conſequently, a Conſent and Agreement in Fundamental Articles of Faith. So that where this Foundation is not, or where this Agreement in Fundamental Articles is wanting, there cannot be that Fellowſhip and Communion of Saints which we make profeſſion of in the Apoſtles Creed; but the Words of St.* John *do then take place,* If any come unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, *&c. But where the Unity of the Foundation, and of Chriſtian Faith does ſtand firm and unſhaken, there is a Communion and Fellowſhip of Saints, and there it*

(*a*) Diſquiſ. Theol. de Sanctorum Communione. §. 61, 62, 67, 70.

ought

ought to be, and to continue firm, and not at all be ſhaken, by a Diſagreement in this or the other Point, which do not directly overturn the Foundation; as alſo in Rites and Ceremonies: For as all Differences do not utterly deſtroy the Church, but only thoſe that overturn the Foundation of Faith; in like manner all Differences do not diſſolve the Fellowſhip and Communion of Saints, but only thoſe that directly ſhake and weaken the Foundation of Faith, in whole or in part. And preſently after: *In ſhort, Agreement in Fundamentals, or Doctrines neceſſary to Salvation, is requiſite to the Communion of Saints; alſo in things not Fundamental, in difficult Queſtions, nay, even in Rites and Ceremonies, Agreement would be amiable, and greatly to be deſired. But in this imperfect State, and in ſo great a Variety of particular Churches, of the Cuſtoms of Places, and of human Capacities, it is not to be expected; yet the Communion of Saints may continue firm, as long as their Conſent in Fundamentals does ſo continue.* Whence he concludes, that the Reformed Churches may, and ought to come to a Union among themſelves. The other is alſo a Man of great Note, *Benedictus Aretius*, a Divine of *Bern*, who lived at the Age of the Reformation. He ſpeaking of the Unity of the Church, tells us (*a*), *That it conſiſts in an Agreement in the chief Articles of true Religion, notwithſtanding diverſity of Gifts*; and repeats it again, *That the Unity of the Church*

(*a*) Problematum Theologicorum parte III. cap. de Concordia Eccleſiæ.

conſiſts

conſiſts in an Agreement in the chief Articles of Faith; and goes on thus: *We call thoſe the chief Articles of Faith, which are neceſſary to Salvation, and which are expreſly contained in the Creed. To come to an Agreement in theſe, is what we call Union; in other things, where Perſons can't come to an Agreement, Diverſity of Opinions muſt be allowed: Yea further, we may freely own our Ignorance in theſe Matters, as St.* Auſtin *ſays*, It is no Reproach to a Chriſtian to confeſs his Ignorance in abundance of Caſes; *which makes againſt thoſe who inſiſt upon univerſal Conſent, even in the moſt minute Queſtions, and unleſs a Perſon will ſubſcribe to every Point, are prepared with their Thunderbolts, Hereſies, Sects, Excommunications, nay Priſons, and Death. It were eaſy to produce proper Inſtances hereof, if there was need; but we know this was never the Method approved of by the true Church, only ſome malignant Spirits have kindled ſuch Flames, that they might obtain the Preheminence. But let them conſider, what an abſurd and impoſſible thing they require; for there never was ſo perfect and finiſh'd a Genius in the World, to whoſe Judgment all learned Men could ſee Reaſon to ſubſcribe, and to conform their own private Sentiments* ——. 2. *And the Diverſity of Gifts ſeems to ſpeak the ſame thing; for what if I have not that Light that you have, or you that I have, or neither of us what a third hath, ſhall we therefore go to perſecute one another for our different Apprehenſions of things? No! Religion allows no ſuch thing.* 3. *But if we examine the thing more throughly, this Diverſity of Opinions ſometimes*

times has its Advantages; for hereby Mens Abilities are excited, the Reaſon of Things is more duly conſidered, Scripture is more carefully examined and compared with itſelf, Arguments are more impartially weighed, and Poſterity comes to underſtand and believe what at firſt was thought to be abſurd. Thus excellently well does he argue.

BUT we are not inſenſible that ſeveral things may be objected againſt this Forbearance of Perſons who diſagree with each other, that we have been pleading for; which yet may ſo eaſily be confuted from what has been already ſaid, that we need not ſtay particularly to anſwer them. We ſhall only obſerve two things in the general: One is, That whatever is objected againſt Toleration, or Forbearance, is objected alſo againſt Scripture itſelf; and particularly againſt the Apoſtle *Paul*, who ſo earneſtly maintain'd and recommended it to us: the other is, That if any Inconveniencies ſhould happen to attend ſuch a Toleration, or Forbearance, let it be remember'd, there are more, and greater by far, that attend the contrary; which is not an ungrounded Aſſertion, but abundantly confirm'd by the Experience of all Ages; as all who are acquainted with the State of the Church in antient or latter Times, will readily own.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

An Inſtance of a Fundamental Difference in our Separation from the Church of Rome.

WHAT has been hitherto ſaid, has been moſtly in generals: we will now briefly propoſe an Inſtance of a Fundamental Difference, and another of a Difference not Fundamental; both which we ſhall take from the neighbouring and moſt conſiderable Societies of Chriſtians in the World. And hereby the Uſe and Application of the Rules which we have laid down, will be made to appear.

THERE is not a more flagrant Inſtance of the former any where to be met with, than in our Separation from the Church of *Rome*, which before we go about to explain, there needs a few things to be cleared. *Firſt*, To form a right Judgment of the *Romiſh Religion*, we are not to regard the Sentiments of this, or that private Man, or of this or that private Doctor; but we are to regard publick Acts Decrees of Councils, which in their Account have the Authority of Law; the conſtant Uſage of their Church, which has never been condemned, but carefully enjoined and applauded. *Secondly*, It muſt be owned, the *Papiſts* do admit all the Fundamental Points of the Chriſtian Religion, but yet by

another way, which has been already taken notice of, do effectually ſtrike at the Foundation itſelf, by adding to, or building ſuch things upon the Foundation, as do looſen, and in a great meaſure deſtroy it. *Thirdly*, Yet all the Errors of the *Papiſts* are not of the ſame Conſequence; ſome indeed are tolerable, but others cannot by any means be borne with. *Fourthly*, We muſt alſo diſtinguiſh between different Times: for ſome things might very well be borne with, at a time when there was leſs Light, and Errors were not ſo thoroughly eſtabliſhed, and a greater Liberty was allowed Men to differ; which things at another time, and in other Circumſtances, would be perfectly intolerable, after greater Light had ſhined forth, and greater Advantages were given to diſcover the Truth; and after thoſe things, which formerly were left free and undetermined, were paſs'd into the Form of a Law. *Fifthly*, We muſt make a great Difference between our judging of them, and our judging of things; and indeed the beſt way is to paſs no Judgment at all upon Men, but to leave them to the Judgment of God, unleſs we have unconteſtable Evidence to go by: But we are allowed to judge freely of Things, of Doctrines, of Worſhip, and Diſcipline, from the Word of God.

THESE things being premis'd, we ſhall briefly offer the following Arguments, to ſhew that our Diſſent from the Church of *Rome* is Fundamental, and conſequently that we can have

have no Communion with her, as Matters now ſtand.

1. SINCE they require us to believe, and to profeſs, and that as Articles of our Faith, things which we do not believe, which we know to be falſe, yea which we are fully perſuaded are abſurd and contradictory; certainly we can't with a ſafe Conſcience communicate with them, but muſt be Hypocrites in a Matter which of all other is the moſt weighty and important, and in which Perſons cannot diſſemble, without incurring the greateſt Guilt. Thus they require us to believe *Tranſubſtantiation*, tho we know it is attended with endleſs Abſurdities and Contradictions. They require us to believe *Purgatory*, and the Intereſt and Interceſſion of their Saints in Heaven, beſides many other things, which at leaſt are doubtful, nay, and ſome of them plainly falſe, and contrary to Scripture. Let a Man but read the *Confeſſion of Faith* of *Pope* Pius IV. which is drawn up according to the Determinations of the *Council of Trent*, and joined to its Decrees, and he will preſently ſee, that all who differ from it, are condemned, anathematiz'd, and conſequently that they cannot live in that Communion, without the moſt deteſtable Hypocriſy.

BUT it may be ſaid, all Perſons are not obliged to believe theſe things; it is ſufficient only to ſubmit to the Church. But beſides many Reaſons againſt ſubmitting to the Church, which we ſhall ſee hereafter, all they that do ſo ſubmit, are by that very Act bound to ſubmit to all

the Decrees of their Councils, and conſequently to thoſe Doctrines, of which we have been ſpeaking.

IT will be replied, that the Council of *Trent* hath not been received in all Places, namely in *France*. But *Firſt*, in thoſe very Places, where the Decrees of the Council concerning Diſcipline, are not admitted, as in *France*, yet their Decrees concerning Matters of Faith are, which are the things we are now ſpeaking of. *Secondly*, moſt of thoſe things which were determined in the Council of *Trent*, had been determined before in ſome preceding Councils; as the *Worſhip of Images* in the ſecond *Council of* Nice, and *Tranſubſtantiation* in the *Council of* Lateran, in the Year 1215.

2. ANOTHER inſuperable Reaſon why we cannot hold Communion with them, is the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome* concerning the ſupreme Rule, or the ſupreme Judge of Controverſies of Faith. If any thing is Important, or Fundamental in Religion, this is undoubtedly ſo, *viz.* What is the Rule of Faith: Who is the ſupreme Judge in religious Matters: Where is the ſupreme Authority lodged, which ought to determine and regulate all our Belief. There, if any where, we may apply the Words of *Lucretius* *,

——— *In building, if the Line*
Be not exact and ſtrait, the Rule decline,
Or Level falſe; how vain is the Deſign?

* Book IV. ver. 528.

FOR

FOR if any thing is admitted as a Rule of Faith, which is fallacious, and liable to miſtake, a Door is hereby opened for all Errors, and the greateſt Abſurdities; but ſuch is the Rule, ſuch the Judge, and ſuch the Principle which the Church of *Rome* holds, when ſhe makes the *Church*, meaning herſelf, the infallible Rule of Faith, and ſupreme Judge of Controverſies, to whom all are bound to ſubmit.

NOW, leſt they ſhould ſay we reject this Principle, without giving any Reaſon, we ſhall briefly offer two or three things only which ſeem to be unexceptionable. And,

(1.) IF any Proof is valid that a Perſon is not infallible, this undoubtedly is ſo; if it be certain that he has actually erred, and that in a very groſs and palpable manner, and very often too; but eſpecially if he has decreed thoſe things which are abſurd, impoſſible, and imply many plain Contradictions: But the Church of *Rome* did ſo decree in the Caſe of *Tranſubſtantiation*; and conſequently this Inſtance alone is ſufficient utterly to overthrow that Principle.

(2.) THERE is no need of taking any great pains to overthrow the Popiſh Rule of Faith; we may ſit ſtill, and at a diſtance behold them oppoſing one another: For if the Church is infallible, this Infallibility muſt reſide either in the Pope, or in Councils; or in Pope and Councils both together. But the *Gallican* Church hath abundantly ſhewn that the Pope is not infallible; and the *Italians* on the other hand have as plainly ſhewn, that Councils are not

And each ſide frequently reject the Decrees of Pope and Councils together; ſo that we may hold our peace, and be quiet, and they themſelves will deſtroy one another, and ſufficiently demonſtrare the Defect of their own Rule.

AND that theſe inteſtine Diviſions amongſt them are not a light and trivial Matter, is abundantly evident, from innumerable other Quarrels which have been carried on with great Warmth in former times; but eſpecially from the preſent Diſpute about the Conſtitution *Unigenitus*: For great part of the *Gallican* Church does charge the Pope in their publick Writings, with grievous Errors in Matters of Faith, and moral Principles, and in Matters of Diſcipline too. On the other hand, the Pope takes frequent occaſion to anathematize thoſe that oppoſe him: Some Biſhops take part with the Pope, others are againſt him, and it is not yet known what will be the Iſſue of ſo warm a Contention. Now, what Madneſs and Folly would it be for us to involve ourſelves in Controverſies of ſo great Importance, about the moſt important Queſtion of all other, *viz.* the Rule of Faith; wherein, to ſpeak the Truth, both ſides ſeem to conquer in attacking their Adverſary's Cauſe, and both to be conquered, when they come to ſtate and defend their own?

(3.) WE have yet greater Reaſon to reject their Rule, when we conſider that it deſtroys all Certainty of Faith; and neceſſarily introduces Scepticiſm: For that we may be certain of the Authority of the Church, it muſt be diſcovered

vered to us, either by the Light of Nature, or by Scripture, or by the Determinations of the Church herſelf. But it can't be known by the Light of Nature; for there is no ſuch Principle in Nature, that there is an infallible Church: nor from Scripture, as may be infer'd from their own Confeſſion; for they ſay, that the Authority and Senſe of Scripture itſelf, does depend upon the Church, and cannot be known but by her Aſſiſtance; and thoſe Texts that are brought to prove this matter, are very foreign to the purpoſe. Nor, laſtly, can it be known from the Church herſelf: For, to ſay that we are to believe the Church, becauſe the Church has ſo determin'd, is ridiculouſly to take for granted what ought to be proved.

NOR is it ſufficient to know that there is a Church, yea an infallible one; but we ought to know which and where that is, and by whom ſhe makes known her Mind. Concerning which things, we have already ſhewn how greatly they differ and contradict one another.

AND if we were certain thus far, we ought to know further, in what things the Church cannot err; whether in matters of *Fact*, as well as in matters of *Right*; and in matters of *Diſcipline*, as well as of *Doctrine*.

MOREOVER, we ought to know all that is neceſſary to make the Determinations of the Church valid, that they may have the force of a Law: If they are Popes Bulls; when they are to be eſteem'd authoritative, when the Pope

ſpeaks

ſpeaks *ex cathedra*: If they are the Decrees of Councils, we ought to be inform'd when they are lawfully aſſembled, who are the true Members that ought to be preſent, what is the due Form of proceeding, and when they are truly General Councils, *&c.* which things make the Popiſh Rule of Faith the moſt uncertain thing in the World: And hence every one may ſee what reaſon we have to reject it.

3. BUT one of the principal Reaſons which make us call our Difference with the Papiſts a fundamental one, is taken from the buſineſs of Worſhip, which is not only very different from, but ſuch as can never be reconcil'd and brought to the ſame Form with ours. For that Worſhip which is uſed in the Church of *Rome*, and which ſhe enjoins upon pain of Excommunication, and for the neglect of which, ſhe inflicts the greateſt temporal Puniſhments, the ſame we count ſinful, unlawful, contrary to the Word of God, and full of Superſtition and Idolatry; as the Adoration of the Hoſt, Images, Reliques, and the Croſs; the Invocation of Saints and Angels, and all ſuch like Fooleries. We don't now enter into the Debate whether we herein miſtake or not: this however is certain, that as long as we are of this mind, we can't poſſibly join with a Church that ordains ſuch Worſhip: for as the Apoſtle ſays † in a like caſe, *What Communion hath Light with Darkneſs? or what Agreement has the Temple of*

† 2 *Cor.* vi. 14, 15, 16.

God

God with Idols? From whence he immediately draws this Inference in the words of the Prophet, *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, and touch no unclean thing, ſaith the Lord.*

THE force of which reaſoning will be increas'd by the following Obſervations, which we ſhall only mention. *Firſt*, This difference is not ſpeculative, but altogether practical; for the whole Affair of Divine Worſhip turns upon it, and therefore nothing can be of greater Weight and Importance than this matter. *Secondly*, The Deſign of Chriſtianity, nay the very Eſſence and Foundation of it, is to reclaim Mankind from the Worſhip of Creatures, and things which by Nature are not God, to the Worſhip of the only true God. Whence it appears to be moſt intolerable Preſumption in thoſe who, contrary hereunto, attempt to call us off from the true God to the Worſhip of Creatures and dumb Idols. *Thirdly*, However this Worſhip may be palliated, and ſpeciouſly defended, yet it is ſo evident in Fact, and the practice of it ſo publickly allowed of, that it cannot be called into queſtion. *Fourthly*, This Argument is as plain as can be; nothing can be more evident and obvious to the Capacity of every one; there is no need of Acuteneſs and Sagacity to diſcern it. The Rule of God's Word is very plain on the one hand, and the contrary Practice is as obvious on the other.

4. AS their Errors in Doctrine are exceeding groſs, and their Superſtitions in Worſhip not to

be borne with, ſo the Tyranny of their Government is ſo great, that we can by no means ſubmit to ſuch an intolerable and antichriſtian Yoke. For here we ſee the Papal Monarchy obtained by mere Uſurpation; Laws enacted in perfect oppoſition to the Laws of Chriſt; Diſpenſations from the Divine Law readily granted, as in the caſe of Marriages, and Abſolutions from Oaths indulged to Kings and Princes with the utmoſt Perfidiouſneſs, and to the ſubverſion of all Society. Such a heap of Laws about Ceremonies, as does effectually bring us back again to Judaiſm and Heatheniſm; Chriſtian Liberty entirely aboliſhed, Anathemas denounced againſt thoſe who differ from them even in the moſt trifling things, as in the number of the Sacraments. *Laſtly*, Fines and Impriſonments, Gibbets, Stakes, the Inquiſition, with the like wholeſome Severities: All which give us ſuch an abhorrence of the Popiſh Communion, that as long as the Authority of the Pope continues, we can never think of ſubmitting to his Diſcipline, or of leaving our Lives, and the Comfort of them, our Faith and Conſcience, at his mercy.

IN a word, let them ſhake off the Popiſh Yoke, which the Papiſts themſelves begin to be ſufficiently ſenſible is intolerable: Let no Violence be ever offer'd to Conſcience; let all Men judge of Religion from the Word of God only; let every thing that ſavours of Idolatry, be baniſh'd from their Worſhip, and then we ſhall not be backward, but readily concert Meaſures towards a Reconciliation and Union with them.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

An Inſtance of a Difference not Fundamental, in the Diſagreement between Proteſtants, viz. *the* Lutherans, *and thoſe that are called the* Reformed. *That their Differences are not ſo great, but that they eaſily may, and ought to agree with, and tolerate each other.*

WE have ſeen an Inſtance of a Fundamental Difference; but the Difference of thoſe who have agreed in ſhaking off the Papal Yoke, is quite of another Nature; ſome of whom, for diſtinction ſake, are called *Lutherans*, and others *Reformed*. And whoſoever calmly and impartially conſiders the Differences amongſt them, will eaſily perceive that they are by no means ſuch as ſhould hinder mutual Forbearance and Chriſtian Harmony, which has been always greatly wanted, but is more eſpecially neceſſary to both ſides in the preſent Juncture.

AND that we may make our Way the more eaſy, we ſhall premiſe three things: *Firſt*, We don't mean that Perſons ſhould be required to change their Opinions, which as it would be unjuſt to inſiſt upon, ſo it would be impoſſible to accompliſh; but only that thoſe who entertain different Sentiments, ſhould bear with one ano-

ther, which to Perſons of Piety and Moderation ought not to be reckoned any great Difficulty. *Secondly*, We are not in this matter to regard the too rigid Determinations, or the imprudent Writings and Expreſſions, or the odd Opinions of particular Perſons, but only publick Records, or Confeſſions by Princes, or Churches, which whatever Authority they may have, yet in the Opinion of Proteſtants are not infallible, but are to be judged of by the Rule of Scripture. *Thirdly*, The Opinions of each ſide are never to be confounded with the Conſequences of them, whether they be truly or falſely deduced; and Conſequences ought never to be charged upon any who do not own them, but it may be abhor them, unleſs the Caſe be ſo plain and palpable, and ſo univerſally acknowledged, that no one who owns the Principle, can poſſibly deny the Conſequence.

THESE things being premis'd, let us ſee in ſhort how far Proteſtants agree with one another, and in compariſon hereof, how ſmall their Diſagreement is; whence it will appear how eaſy, yea how reaſonable and neceſſary it is for them to come to that Forbearance and Unity of which we ſpeak.

HOW conſiderable and important their Agreement is, may be underſtood by comparing together their *Confeſſions of Faith*; yea, it is very evident, by conſidering the *Augsburgh Confeſſion* alone, which both ſides receive and acknowledge. Both ſides agree that the Word of God contained in the Scriptures, is the only

Rule

Rule of Faith, by which Rule all humane Traditions and Sanctions are to be judged of; That the only true God is the Object of all religious Worſhip, and that the leaſt Shew of Devotion is not to be paid to Angels, or Saints, to Croſſes, or Reliques, or to any Images of Wood, or Stone, or the like. Both ſides place all their Hope of Pardon and Salvation in Chriſt alone; in his Merits, and Promiſes. Both agree that the Benefits purchaſed by Chriſt, and conſequently eternal Salvation, are not to be obtained but by Faith and Repentance, and that not by a dead Faith, but ſuch as works by Love, and by Repentance, that is ſincere, and demonſtrated by a Life of good Works. Both ſolemnize the Sacraments of Baptiſm, and the Lord's Supper, according to the Command of Chriſt, without thoſe many Inventions of Men, by which theſe holy Myſteries have been greatly abus'd and corrupted; and ſo conform themſelves to the wholeſome Inſtitution of Chriſt, by which his Love is ratified to us. Both acknowledge, that Prayers and Praiſes, Thankſgivings and Almſdeeds, that our Bodies, and even our whole ſelves, are the true Offerings and Sacrifices which we are to preſent unto God, and renounce that unbloody Sacrifice which others have added, as impious and abſurd. Both believe that there are but two Ends of all Men, eternal Glory, and eternal Miſery; and reject that middle State of Purgatory, which ſome, contrary to the Word of God, have deviſed merely to ſupport their Avarice and Superſtition.

on. And in ſhort, all the Principles of the Chriſtian Faith, without exception, are received in common on both ſides, together with an Abhorrence of the Errors and Superſtitions of Popery. Nor indeed can it be imagined how Perſons, who ſeriouſly conſider theſe things, and are ſuitably affected with the Importance of them, can be ſatisfied to break the Bond of Fellowſhip, and refrain from worſhipping God together, upon account of ſome few and trivial Differences about things that are obſcure.

SUCH is their Agreement; in compariſon of which, as is now evident, and may eaſily be prov'd, their Diſagreement is ſmall and inconſiderable. We ſhall not ſtay here, to take notice of ſome ſmall Differences in ritual Matters, as about the Uſe of Tapers, Images, Confeſſion, and Exorciſm in Baptiſm, *&c.* which are not the ſame every where, and ought to be no Obſtacle to a hearty Union; for every Church may enjoy its own particular Uſages, and the Obſervation of theſe things be left at liberty, and not be obliged to a conſtant invariable Form herein, as is acknowledged in the Confeſſions of both ſides: nor ſhall we touch upon ſome leſs Differences in matters of Opinion, which are either Diſputes about Words only, or peculiar Tenets of private Divines rather than of whole Churches; or it may be only Conſequences drawn from ſome Principles, which are by no means to be charged on the Churches themſelves. All theſe things we ſhall paſs over for the preſent, and briefly give our Judgment, and

 that

that with Freedom and a Deſire to promote Peace, concerning three principal Controverſies only, which ſeem to be all that are of any moment and which alone uſe to be regarded in this matter.

THE firſt Queſtion therefore is, whether the Body of Chriſt be truly and ſubſtantially preſent in the Euchariſt?

THO this at firſt ſight may ſeem to be a Controverſy of very great moment, yet if we look more narrowly into it, and conſider what is granted on both ſides, we ſhall have different Apprehenſions of it: for both ſides grant that the Bread and Wine are truly preſent, and continue all the time of the Celebration; and therefore are not converted or tranſubſtantiated into the Body of Chriſt. On the other hand, both ſides agree that Chriſt is truly preſent, yea that his Body and Blood are truly exhibited, and are ſo far preſent as the Nature of a Sacrament requires. They both agree that the Body and Blood of Chriſt are not preſent in a groſs and ſenſible manner, ſo as to be included in that Place; that they are not preſent after the manner of Bodies, but after the manner of Spirits, or in a ſpiritual manner; yea are no more nor leſs preſent than as the Nature and End of a Sacrament require, and therefore only in *a Sacramental Manner*, which is an Expreſſion admitted and us'd on both ſides. Further, both ſides equally condemn the Abuſes and Superſtitions of the Church of *Rome*, as Tranſubſtantiation, the Sacrifice of the Maſs, with-holding the Cup from the Laity, the Proceſſion,

ceſſion, Elevation and Adoration of the Hoſt. Finally, both ſides are fully ſatisfied that bodily Eating, ſuch as is performed by good and bad Men alike, does not avail us to Salvation, but only that which is perform'd by Faith. To which purpoſe one might bring a plain Teſtimony from * *Luther*, and a no leſs remarkable one from † *Brentius*; which for brevity's ſake we omit. What Difference does now remain? not any concerning the Preſence it ſelf: for both ſides confeſs, if we would ſpeak accurately, that the Body of Chriſt is only ſo far preſent as the Nature and End of the Sacrament require: all the Difference therefore is concerning the manner of his Preſence, one ſide contenting themſelves with believing ſuch a ſort of Preſence as is plain and eaſy to be conceived, and agreeable to the Stile of Scripture, the other imagining that Chriſt is preſent in ſome wonderful and incomprehenſible manner, which to the former ſeems to be of no manner of uſe, and attended with unſurmountable Difficulties, and therefore they cannot admit of it. This is the whole Subject of Difference; and what there is in this that affects the Foundation of Faith in the leaſt, we cannot ſee, or what ſhould hinder ſuch Perſons from bearing with one another, till God grant greater Light to thoſe who are under a Miſtake in the matter.

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* In Catechiſmo minori.

† In Syngrammate Suevorum; tum in exegeſi in Joannem.

NEITHER

NEITHER is there any greater Weight in that other Queſtion which ariſes out of the former, concerning the Perſon of Chriſt, Whether the divine Perfections, ſuch as Omnipreſence, Omnipotence, and the like, are communicated to his human Nature: For each Side owns all that is important in this matter, *viz.* the two Natures of Chriſt, and the Union of both, to be without any Change, or Diviſion, or Mixture of either; that the Properties of both Natures are aſcribed to Chriſt; and finally, that this Myſtery of Godlineſs, concerning *God manifeſt in the Fleſh*, is a Thing very ſublime, far above the Comprehenſion of Men. Other things which remain doubtful, are ſo obſcure in themſelves, and come to little more than a Debate about Words, that it muſt be a very hard Caſe, as that excellent Man and Divine, *John Lewis Fabricius* *, has obſerv'd, and proceed from great want of Charity, if Perſons, who don't exactly agree in ſuch things, can't regard each other as Brethren notwithſtanding.

THERE remains a third Controverſy, concerning Predeſtination; a Matter that was never brought into diſpute in *Luther*'s Time, nor many Years after, but ſeems to have broke out firſt in the Quarrel between *Zanchy* and *Marbachius*, about the Year 1561. However, *Zanchy* did not deny a general Will in God to ſave all Men if they believed, as may be

* In Meditatione circa Perſonam Chriſti.

ſeen in his Writings *; neither did he teach any thing more rigid, about Election and Reprobation, than *Luther* himſelf has done *. This Controverſy afterwards increaſed, and is now reckon'd by moſt Perſons to be the chief of all. But tho ſome Branches of it may be greatly magnify'd, as thoſe Queſtions which are *concerning univerſal and particular Grace, Whether Election depends upon foreſeen Faith, Whether the Grace of God be reſiſtible or irreſiſtible, And whether Believers may fall from Grace or not*; yet thoſe who diligently conſider the Matter, will ſee, that upon the whole there is a great Agreement between them; and that ſuch as are herein miſtaken, (tho we do not now enquire who they are) may nevertheleſs be very good Chriſtians. For both Sides agree, *Firſt*, That God is the Author of every good Thing; but that all Evil comes from our ſelves. *Secondly*, That Man is a free Agent, worthy of Honour or Reproach, and inexcuſable whenever he ſins againſt God. *Thirdly*, That every Man who believes and repents, is readily accepted of God; and that it is very pleaſing to him for any one thus to believe and repent. *Fourthly*, That all who periſh, do ſo through their own Fault; that God is not at all wanting to them, or any way acceſſary hereunto; and therefore, that their Deſtruction is no way to be charged upon him. *Fifthly*, That nothing

* Depulſ. Calumn.
† In Lib. de Servo Arbitrio, aliiſque in locis.

comes

comes to paſs in Time, but what was determined or permitted to be in the eternal Decrees of God. *Sixthly*, That God did by one moſt ſimple Act thus decree all things. *Seventhly*, That God will render to every Man according to his Works, and proceed in the Judgment of all with the greateſt Equity, Wiſdom, and Clemency. And *Laſtly*, That in all theſe Queſtions concerning the Ways and Counſels of God, there are many things which are far above our Comprehenſion, many things, the Reaſons and Manner of which we cannot account for. And here both Sides are ready to cry out in the Words of the Apoſtle, *O the Depths*, &c. and acknowledge that they are very well adapted to this Controverſy.

TO all which if we add the following Things: *Firſt*, That *Luther* has ſpoken as harſhly of theſe things, if not more ſo, than any of the Reformed. *Secondly*, That *Melancthon*, who had far more moderate Sentiments in theſe things, and whom the *Lutherans* do now follow, did nevertheleſs maintain great Friendſhip with both *Luther* and *Calvin* as long as they lived. *Thirdly*, That many of the Reformed Divines, as *Bullinger*, that great Man, and Superintendant of *Zurich*, did plainly approach to * *Melancthon*'s Judgment, (for which reaſon he was ſaid to *melancthoniſe*.) *Fourthly*, That a great part of the Reformed at preſent, name-

* *As may be ſeen in ſeveral of his Works, but eſpecially in his Oration* de Moderatione ſervanda in negotio Prædeſtinationis, &c.

ly, almoſt all the *Engliſh* Biſhops, the Divines of *Brandenburg*, and many others, do either agree with the *Lutherans* in theſe Points, or come very near them. *Fifthly*, That thoſe of the Reformed, that are moſt rigid in their Notions of Predeſtination, abhor every impious Conſequence that may be deduced from thence, and follow after Holineſs themſelves, and urge it upon others as much as any. If all theſe Things were conſidered and duly weighed by a pious and peaceable Mind, it would appear, that arduous and ſublime Queſtions about Predeſtination ought by no means to ſeparate Men in Affection from one another, and to hinder Love and Concord; but every Man ſhould enjoy his own Opinions without raiſing Jealouſies, and moleſting others, upon ſuch Matters: much leſs would one expect that the Communion of the Church, and the common Rights of Chriſtians, ſhould be ſuſpended upon ſo perplex'd and obſcure a Point.

WHAT has been ſaid concerning the ſmall Importance of ſuch Controverſies, and the Reaſonableneſs of exerciſing Forbearance in theſe Things, will receive further Confirmation by obſerving what follows, which we ſhall but mention, and leave to the pious and peaceable Chriſtian to conſider and enlarge upon: *Firſt*, That all theſe Queſtions reſide in the Underſtanding only, and have little or no Influence upon our Worſhip and Practice: for which reaſon we eaſily may, and certainly ought to bear with one another's different

ferent Sentiments. *Secondly*, That they are Things above common Capacities, and indeed little more than ſcholaſtick Queſtions. *Thirdly*, There are many Chriſtians on both ſides, who, it may be, have never heard of theſe Diſputes, or underſtand very little of them, or are miſtaken about them, or who are doubtful, and never could aſſent either way; and whether theſe are to be debarr'd the Hope of Salvation, or to be excluded from the Communion of the Church, we deſire our *Lutheran* Brethren calmly to conſider. *Fourthly*, The Diſpute is not ſo much about Things themſelves, as the Mode and Circumſtances of them; as has been already obſerved. *Fifthly*, Theſe Queſtions do not ſo much concern good Men as bad, *i. e.* the Admiſſion of Perſons unworthy, and God's Decrees concerning the Reprobate. Why ſhould not we therefore paſs by them, and make it our Buſineſs to be found in the number of the Faithful? *Sixthly*, Both Sides deſign well; therefore if they do not merit Praiſe, they ought however to be excuſed. *Seventhly*, Too much of human Frailty has been very viſible in theſe Diſputes already, prepoſterous Zeal, intemperate Anger, and too plain Inſtances of Ambition and Vain-glory. Theſe Paſſions have too much prevail'd, and it is high time now to allay and ſuppreſs them. *Eighthly*, There are exceeding great and almoſt inſuperable Difficulties on both ſides, eſpecially about the Doctrine of Predeſtination. *Ninthly*, The Controverſy about Predeſtination has been debated in

all Ages, in all Places, and by Perſons of all Perſuaſions. *Tenthly*, There have been great and conſiderable Men on both ſides, Men that we cannot eaſily condemn, and ſhould be loth to reject from our Communion; ſuch as St. *Chryſoſtom*, and the Fathers of the firſt Ages on one ſide, and St. *Auſtin*, with a vaſt Number of Followers on the other. Should theſe Men be raiſed, and live again in our Day, how readily ſhould we embrace them? at leaſt, we could not think of caſting them out of the Church, and debarring them the Offices of it. *Eleventhly*, We may learn Wiſdom in this matter from our very Adverſaries, the Papiſts, who, tho they are generally very rigid, and the greateſt Enemies to Toleration, yet in this very Affair, and in Things of greater moment too, bear with one another's different Sentiments, and retain both Parties in their Communion. *Twelfthly*, The Queſtions which are now the matter of Debate, were quite left out of the *Ausburgh* Confeſſion, as was acknowledged by Divines of both ſides in the Conference at *Leipſick*. *Thirteenthly*, There are many other Differences of Opinion, not only of equal Importance, but far greater, which yet are patiently borne with on both ſides; and why ſhould not the like Moderation be uſed in theſe? *Laſtly*, To add no more, I would only ask one thing: Can it be any where ſhewn, that God, the *only Lawgiver*, and *who alone has power to ſave and to deſtroy*, has ever determined that thoſe Doctrines, which are controverted among Proteſtants,

teſtants, are neceſſary to be known, in one or other determinate Senſe, in order to Salvation? or that the oppoſite Errors do exclude Men from Salvation? To ſay that he has, would ſhew great Raſhneſs, and betray a Mind blinded with Party-Zeal. But if the great Judge of the World has determined no ſuch thing, what Arrogance is it for ſuch as we to deſire to be thought more righteous and more rigid than God himſelf?

HITHERTO, therefore, it has been plainly ſhewn, that there is ſo great an Agreement among Proteſtants, and that their Diſagreement is ſo inconſiderable, that they may very well exerciſe mutual Forbearance, and enter into a hearty Union with one another. But we ſhall go a Step further, and venture to aſſert, that this is not a Matter left to our Liberty, but of the utmoſt Neceſſity and moſt ſtrict Obligation, whether we regard Conſcience or Prudence. And firſt, with regard to Conſcience: For if this Diſagreement does not hinder but Perſons who ſo differ may be good Chriſtians, and true Members of the Church, Communion muſt neceſſarily be held with them; which if we deny, we are guilty of violating the great Law of Charity, and of rending aſunder the Body of Chriſt: For Chriſt has declared that all his Diſciples *ſhould be one*; and St. *Paul* directs, that the *Unity of the Spirit be kept in the Bond of Peace*; as we have endeavour'd to ſhew, *Chap.* VII. by a great Number and Force of Arguments. But no one has preſs'd this Matter,

Matter more ſtrongly, as far as it concerns the Controverſies that are among Proteſtants, than the moſt pious and great Lover of Peace, *Samuel Werenfels*, to whoſe excellent * Treatiſe we refer the Reader.

BUT ſuch a Union is no leſs neceſſary from the Laws of Prudence, than from the Obligations of Duty and Conſcience: For who can be ignorant how many Evils have ſprung up from the Violation of it? What Hatred, Strife, and Wars; what a pernicious Cuſtom of endleſs Debates and Slander; what Loſs of Time; what a viſible Decay of Piety and Charity; what a Hindrance to Reformation; and what Triumphs of the Papiſts and other Adverſaries; when all the good Effects, contrary to theſe Evils, might be procured by the Agreement we have been recommending?

HOWEVER, leſt any one ſhould pretend that what we have been propoſing is indeed an excellent and laudable Deſign, and greatly to be deſired, but no more likely ever to be accompliſh'd, than ſquaring the Circle, or finding the Philoſopher's-Stone: This Difficulty, tho it be not altogether imaginary, yet we ſhall remove it in a few Words, *viz.* For what hinders but that which has formerly and elſewhere been often accompliſh'd, if not in all Churches, nor perhaps upon a laſting Foundation, yet in many Places, and at divers Times,

* Conſiderationes generales de Ratione uniendi Eccleſias Proteſtantes.

may

may be effected again; nay, and become universal? There are several known Instances of such a Union which are before every ones Eyes, *viz.* at *Marpurg*, 1529. at *Wittenburg*, 1536. at *Sendomir*, and other Places of *Poland* and *Bohemia*, 1570. and the following Years at *Leipsic*, 1631. at *Charenton* the same Year; at *Cassel* 1661. and at *Koningsberg* in *Prussia* not long since. To these we may add many Acts of the Dyets in *Germany*, from the beginning of the Reformation, even to the present Times, in which the Reformed have been acknowledged as Brethren of the *Ausburgh* Confession, and are still so accounted. To all which may be added innumerable Writings of Princes and States, Churches and Universities, as likewise pious and moderate Men on both sides, who have endeavoured to persuade to such a Union, to promote and recommend it, and laid down proper Methods to effect it. And the famous and learned *Christ. Matth. Pfalsius*, a Divine of *Tarbingen*, has very lately profess'd himself to be of the Number of such pious Persons, and Lovers of Peace, with great Honour, and the Applause of all good Men, (for as to any small Difference that remains, it is not worthy to be regarded): Who declares, *That the Coalition of Protestants has hitherto been prevented, not through any Defect in the thing itself, but thro the Faults of Men* (*a*). And elsewhere (*b*, he *judiciously examines into the Importance of those Controversies that are among Protestants, and shews they are not Fundamental.*

(*a*) Dissert. de Articulis Fundamentalibus. (*b*) Instituti. Theologic. Dogmat. & Moral.

CHAP. X.

Some Advices are offered to promote this Agreement and Forbearance.

THAT remains, is only to add ſome ſhort Advices, which may be of uſe towards effecting this Agreement and Forbearance; which we ſhall ſubmit to the Examination of all pious Readers, and Lovers of Peace.

1. IT is neceſſary for all to preſerve a true and juſt Senſe of Chriſtianity continually in mind; not ſuch as is made up of ſome obſcure Notions, or Scholaſtick Niceties, but which conſiſts in the New Creature, *i. e.* in true Piety and real Vertue.

2. THE Importance of all Doctrines and Controverſies ought to be carefully examined by the Word of God, and by the Laws of Prudence; that a Mountain may not be made of a Mole-hill, nor Hay and Stubble be made the Foundation of Chriſtianity.

3. WHEN Matters are really obſcure and doubtful, our Aſſent ought to be with-held; we ſhould not be wiſe above what is written, but uſe Caution and Sobriety, according to the Meaſure of Light which God has granted us.

4. IT is to be deſired, that we may never ſuffer that firſt, and truly fundamental Principle

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of the Reformation, *That the Holy Scripture is the only Rule of our Faith*, to be forgotten; and conſequently that we may never ſubject our Faith to any Aſſemblies of Men, or to any human Deciſions, whatever Authority or Learning they may be poſſeſs'd of; but that we may try all things, whatever they may be, by the Rule of Gods Word.

5. WE ought always to bear in mind, that we ourſelves are very liable to err; and ſo we ſhall not be too tenacious of the Opinions we have formerly entertained, but be always ready to receive further Light, and hearken to the Admonitions of others.

6. ALL thoſe Queſtions that are diſputed among Proteſtants, which ſurmount the Capacities of common People, and contribute nothing towards promoting Piety, or Holineſs, ought never to be refer'd to them.

7. AND when ſuch Queſtions are diſputed in Schools, it ought to be with the utmoſt Modeſty and Humility; and at the ſame time it ought to be ſhewn that theſe things do not belong to the Foundation of Faith.

8. IN ſuch Queſtions, and all that are equally intricate, the very Words of Scripture ought to be uſed, as much as poſſible, and the Notions and Terms of the Schoolmen ought with equal Care to be avoided; by which method we ſhall proceed with greater Safety to ourſelves, we ſhall ſtop the Mouths of Gainſayers, and make the Way to the Union of the Church more plain and eaſy to all.

9. OUR Moderation ſhould be uniform towards all Men, and in all Places alike; that it may not be objected to us, that we are diſpoſed to peaceable Meaſures with our Fellow-Chriſtians abroad, but rigid and moroſe towards thoſe with whom we live.

10. LET us continually endeavour to obtain further Meaſures of Piety and Holineſs, and to grow confirmed therein; and alſo to inſtil the ſame into others, which is the Crown of all; by which means we ſhall find no Time for vain and unprofitable Queſtions, *which miniſter nothing to Edification.*

11. WE ought to have that Fundamental Precept of Chriſt our Lord, always before our Eyes, whereby he has ſo ſtrictly enjoined all his Diſciples *to love one another*, and to put it into practice towards our Diſſenting Brethren. For we muſt not imagine that theſe little Diverſities of Opinions among us, are a ſufficient Excuſe for the Breach of Charity.

12. OUR Charity muſt not be ſhewn by ſpeaking and acting in a private manner only; but when Occaſion offers, and our Brethren conſent, we ſhould readily join with them at the Holy Communion. For why ſhould not this ſolemn Commemoration of our Lord's Death, and this peculiar Expreſſion of Chriſtian Charity, be left in common to all, who agree with us in the principal Parts of Chriſtianity, tho' they differ in ſome minute and circumſtantial Articles.

Laſtly, as it is incumbent upon us to behave ourſelves in ſuch a manner; ſo we ought in our ſeveral Stations, and according to the Influence

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we have, both by our Words and Actions, to inſtil the ſame Spirit of Meekneſs into others. Let Princes, Magiſtrates and Miniſters, do each their Part; and then we may hope that theſe Seeds of Moderation and Forbearance, being watered by the Dew of Heaven, will happily ſpring up, and bring forth the moſt pleaſant Fruit, to the Glory of God, the Edification and Union of the Church, and our own eternal Salvation, according to that of the Apoſtle (*a*), *The Fruit of Righteouſneſs is ſown in Peace of them that make Peace.* Amen, Amen.

(*a*) Jam. iii. 18.

Teſtimonies of Scripture, by which, what has been ſaid concerning *Fundamental Articles*, *and exerciſing Forbearance towards our Brethren who differ from us*, is further confirmed and illuſtrated.

MOSES. Deut. xxix. 29. *The ſecret* Things belong *unto the* LORD *our God: But thoſe Things which are revealed*, belong *unto us, and to our Children for ever, that we may do all the Words of the Law.*

CHRIST. Mat. vii. 1. *Judge not that ye be not judged.*

Luke xii. 48. *But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of Stripes, ſhall be beaten with many Stripes: For unto whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall be much required; and to whom Men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

John xvii. 3. *And this is Life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent.*

Matt. xxvii. 19, 20. *Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the* Son, *and of the Holy Ghoſt: Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the End of the World.*

St. PETER. Acts ii. 37, 38. *Now when they heard* this, *they were prick'd in their Heart, and ſaid unto* Peter, *and to the reſt of the Apoſtles*

Apoſtles, Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do? Then Peter *ſaid unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the Remiſſion of Sins, and ye ſhall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt.*

St. PHILIP. Acts viii. 36. *And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain Water: And the Eunuch ſaid, See here is Water; what hindreth me to be baptized? And* Philip *ſaid, if thou believeſt with all thine Heart, thou mayeſt. And he anſwer'd and ſaid, I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God.*

St. PAUL. Rom. ii. 12. *For as many as have ſinned without Law, ſhall alſo periſh without Law: and as many as have ſinned in the Law, ſhall be judged by the Law.*

Rom. x. 6, 9. *But the Righteouſneſs which is of Faith, ſpeaketh on this wiſe, Say not in thine Heart, Who ſhall aſcend into Heaven? (that is, to bring Chriſt down from above.) If thou ſhalt confeſs with thy Mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thy Heart that God hath raiſed him from the Dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved.*

Ibid. x. 14. *How then ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how ſhall they hear without a Preacher?*

Ibid. xiv. 1. *Him that is weak in Faith receive you, but not to doubtful Diſputations.*

——— 4. *Who art thou that judgeſt another Man's Servant? To his own Maſter he ſtandeth or falleth: Yea, he ſhall be holden up; for God is able to make him ſtand.*

——— 13. *Let us not therefore judge one another any more: But judge this rather, That no Man put a Stumbling-block, or an Occaſion to fall in his Brother's Way.*

——— 17. *For the Kingdom of Heaven is not Meat and Drink, but Righteouſneſs and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt.*

1 Cor. i. 12, 13. *Now this I ſay, That every one of you ſaith, I am of* Paul, *and I of* Apollos, *and I of* Cephas, *and I of Chriſt. Is Chriſt divided? was* Paul *crucified for you? or were you baptized in the Name of* Paul?

Ibid. ii. 11, 12, 13. *For what Man knoweth the Things of a Man, ſave the Spirit of a Man, which is in him? even ſo the Things of God knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the Spirit which is of the World, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know Things that are freely given to us of God. Which Things alſo we ſpeak, not in the Words which Man's Wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth; comparing ſpiritual Things with ſpiritual.*

Ibid. viii. 1, 2, 3. *Now as touching Things offered to Idols, we know that we all have Knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up; but Charity edifieth. And if any Man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any Man love God, the ſame is known of him.*

——— 8, 9. *But Meat commendeth us not to God: For neither if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worſe. But take heed, leſt by any means this Liberty of yours become a Stumbling-block to them that are weak.*

——— 12. *But when ye ſin ſo againſt the Brethren, and wound their weak Conſcience, ye ſin againſt Chriſt.*

Ibid. xiii. 1, 2. *Though I ſpeak with the Tongues of Men and of Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as a ſounding Braſs, or a tinkling Cymbal. And though I have the Gift of Propheſy, and underſtand all Myſteries, and all Knowledge; and though I have all Faith, ſo that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing.*

——— 4, 5, 6. *Charity ſuffereth long, and is kind; Charity envieth not; Charity vaunteth not it ſelf, is not puffed up, doth not behave it ſelf unſeemly, ſeeketh not her own, is not eaſily provoked, thinketh no Evil, rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.*

——— 9, 10, 12, 13. *For we know in part, and we propheſy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away. For now we ſee thro a Glaſs, darkly; but then Face to Face; now I know in part; but then ſhall I know even as alſo I am known. And now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, theſe three; but the greateſt of theſe is Charity.*

Gal. vi. 15, 16. *For in Chriſt Jeſus neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but a new Creature. And as many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy, and on the Iſrael of God.*

Eph. iv. 1 —— 6. *I therefore the Priſoner of the Lord, beſeech you that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherwith ye are called. With all Lowlineſs and Meekneſs, with long-ſuffering, forbearing one another in Love; Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace. There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your calling; One Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm; One God and Father of all, who is above all and thro all, and in you all.*

——— 15. *But ſpeaking the Truth in Love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Chriſt.*

Phil. iii. 15, 16. *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwiſe minded, God ſhall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheleſs, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the ſame Rule, let us mind the ſame thing.*

2 Tim ii. 22 — 25. *Flee alſo youthful Luſts: but follow Righteouſneſs, Faith, Charity, Peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure Heart. But fooliſh and unlearned Queſtions avoid, knowing that they do gender Striſes. And the Servant of*

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the Lord muſt not ſtrive; but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient, in Meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves; if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth.

Heb. v. 12, 14. *For when for the Time ye ought to be Teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God; and are become ſuch as have need of Milk, and not of ſtrong Meat. But ſtrong Meat belongeth to them that are of full Age, even thoſe who by reaſon of Uſe have their Senſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil.*

Ibid. vi. 1, 2. *Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt, let us go on unto Perfection; not laying again the Foundation of Repentance from dead Works, and of Faith towards God, Of the Doctrine of Baptiſms, and of laying on of Hands, and of Reſurrection of the dead, and of eternal Judgment.*

St. JAMES. Epiſt. iii. 13. *Who is a wiſe man and endued with Knowledge among you? let him ſhew out of a good Converſation his Works with Meekneſs of Wiſdom.*

Ibid. iv. 12. *There is one Lawgiver, who is able to ſave and to deſtroy: who art thou that judgeſt another?*

St. JOHN. 1 Epiſt. iii. 23. *And this is his Commandment, that we ſhould believe on the Name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and love one another, as he gave us Commandment.*

Ibid. iv. 7, 8. *Beloved, let us love one another: for Love is of God, and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is Love.*

——— 12, 13. *No man hath ſeen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his Love is perfected in us. Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit.*

——— 15, 16. *Whoſoever ſhall confeſs that Jeſus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the Love that God hath to us. God is Love; and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

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FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAge 8. l. 1. del. *that*. p. 16. *bottom*, *for* of, *read* or. p. 31. *after l.* 2. ? l. 30. *for* either, *read* neither. p. 45. *for* John XVII. II. *read* II. p. 48. l. 22. *for* vigorous, *read* rigorous. p. 60. l. 15. 16. *Nice* and *Laterun* in *Italick*. p. 57. after the Authority of the Law, add *and*.